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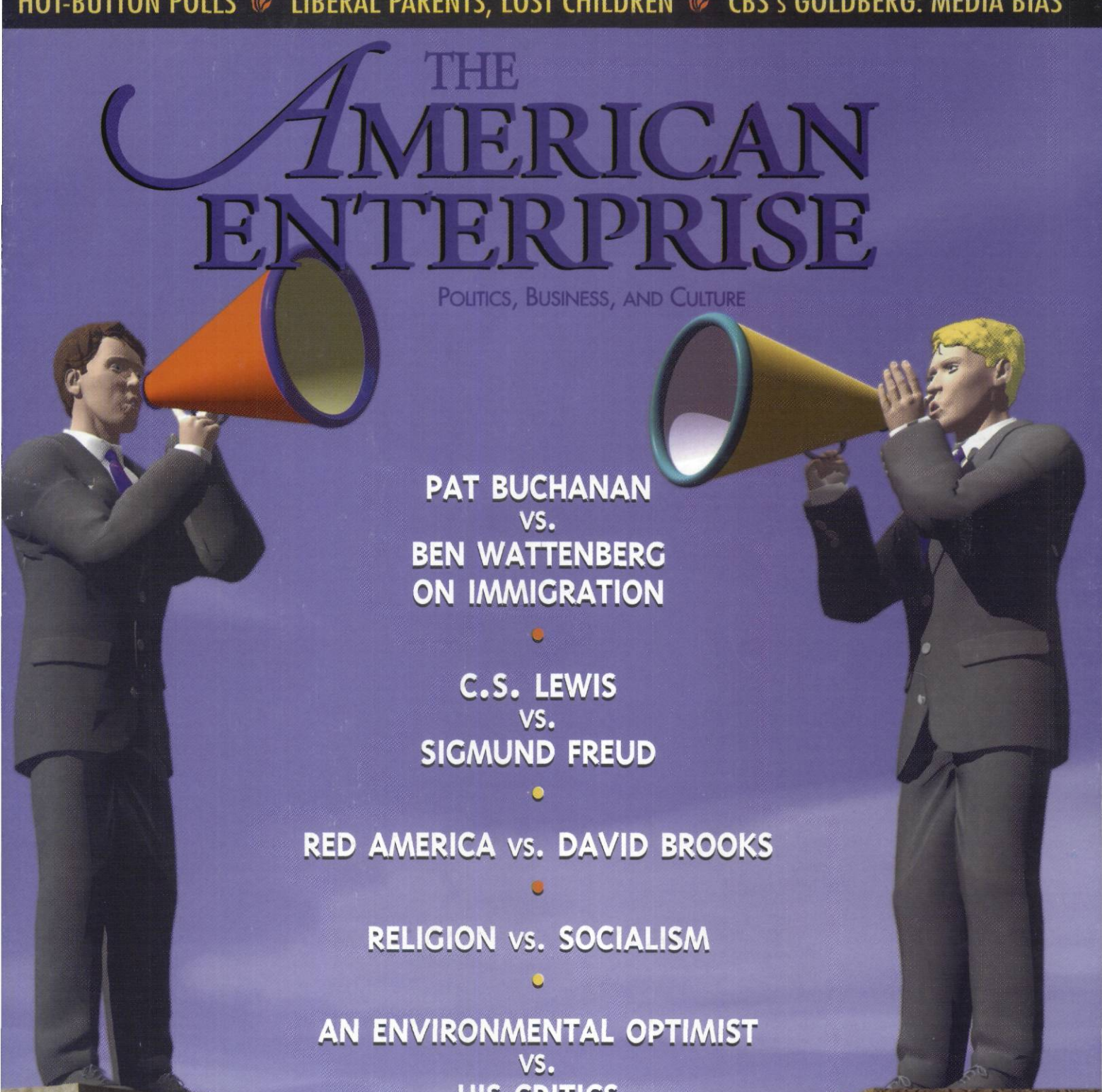

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VS.
BEN WATTENBERG
ON IMMIGRATION

C.S. LEWIS
VS.
SIGMUND FREUD

RED AMERICA VS. DAVID BROOKS

RELIGION VS. SOCIALISM

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VS.
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MARCH 2002

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A world of ideas on public policy.

Are Innovative Medicines Worth the Higher Price?

by Frank R. Lichtenberg

The cost of prescription drugs has helped to lift healthcare reform to the top of the policy agenda in the U.S. Congress and state governments. Higher spending on innovative medicines has led some legislators to advocate restrictive Medicaid formularies, reimportation of low-priced drugs from abroad, and even explicit price controls on pharmaceuticals. But policymakers don't always consider whether the benefits of new medicines outweigh their higher prices. Fortunately, sound quantitative analysis exists to help answer this important question.

It's true that spending in the United States on prescription drugs has grown dramatically in recent years. Previous studies have shown that the replacement of older drugs by newer, more expensive ones is the single most important reason for this increase. However, those studies did not examine the extent to which price differences between new and old drugs reflect changes in quality. Newer medicines tend to be more effective than older ones in treating the same medical condition.

In a recent study, I analyzed prescribed-medicine data from the 1996 Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS) to examine the effect of drug age – i.e., the number of years since the drug's active ingredient was first approved by the Food and Drug Administration – on mortality, morbidity, and total medical expenditure. The MEPS is a nationally representative survey of healthcare use, expenditures, sources of payment, and insurance coverage for the U.S. civilian non-institutionalized population.

The MEPS data allow us to control for many important attributes of the individual patient, his or her medical condition, and the prescription. These attributes include sex, age, education, race, income, insurance status, the payer for the drug, the medical condition for which the drug was prescribed, the duration of the condition, and the number of conditions reported by the patient. Indeed, the fact that many individuals in the sample had multiple medical conditions and multiple prescriptions means that we can control for all individual characteristics, both observed and unobserved.

> ***Newer drugs offer not only health benefits to patients, but also long-run fiscal benefits to public health service***

The results of the analysis strongly support the hypothesis that the use of newer rather than older drugs reduces mortality (i.e., death of the patient), morbidity (i.e., loss of work-days), and total medical expenditure. Although the mortality rate in the MEPS sample is quite low, I found that people consuming new drugs were significantly less likely to die by the end of the survey than were people consuming older drugs. This result is consistent with previous studies showing a highly significant positive relationship across diseases between mortality reduction and the use of new pharmaceuticals. As to morbidity, I found that people consuming new drugs were significantly less likely to miss work or school days than people consuming old drugs, although the estimated effect was not very large.

The study also demonstrates that the use of newer drugs tends to reduce all types of non-drug medical expenditure, with inpatient hospital spending (the most costly type) showing by far the largest reduction. The data indicate that use of newer drugs is associated with shorter (and therefore less expensive), as well as fewer, hospital stays. The total estimated reduction in non-drug expenditure from using newer rather than older drugs is almost four times as large as the increase in drug expenditure. Consequently, using newer drugs results in a substantial net reduction in the total cost of treating the condition.

It's not surprising that policymakers focus their efforts to control public healthcare expenditure on drug spending. The costs of pharmaceuticals (and changes in those costs) are visible to the naked eye, while those in other segments of the healthcare system are hidden. As the MEPS analysis shows, innovative medicines are more cost-effective than older alternatives. Newer drugs offer not only health benefits to patients, but also long-run fiscal benefits to public health services. Identification of those benefits requires careful analysis of good data. It's vital that public officials making drug policy decisions consider the full range of benefits, not just the costs, of newer drugs.

Frank R. Lichtenberg is Courtney C. Brown Professor of Business at Columbia University, and Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research. This piece is based on Dr. Lichtenberg's article entitled "The Benefits and Costs of Newer Drugs: Evidence From the 1996 Medical Expenditure Panel Survey." The full article, which appeared in the September/October 2001 issue of Health Affairs, can be found at http://www.healthaffairs.org.

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This is a real breakthrough, both for public television and for us. It creates an opportunity unlike anything we've been able to achieve previously within public television.

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Regards,

Andrew Walworth
President, New River Media

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THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE

POLITICS, BUSINESS, AND CULTURE

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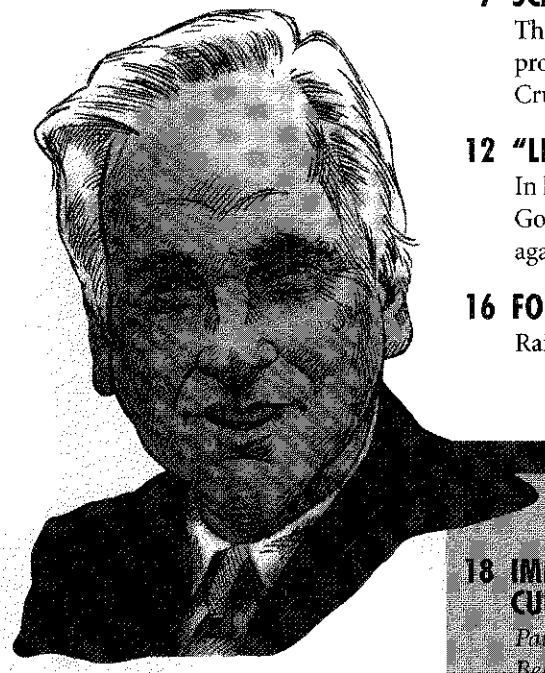

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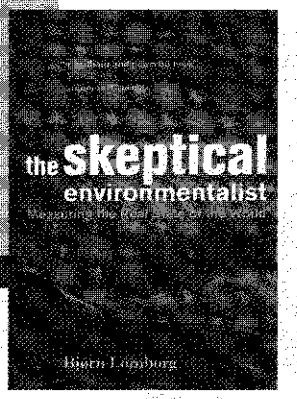

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POLITICS, BUSINESS, AND CULTURE

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Bird's Eye

Karl Zinsmeister

The Secret Formula For Progress

Americans are not especially big on formal debates. We tend to be a practical and modest people, and so long as life is running smoothly, most everyday citizens would rather not spar over esoteric principles. Ronald Reagan reflected this when he teasingly defined an intellectual as "someone who sees something happen in practice and then begins to argue about whether it would work in theory." Most Americans will happily leave those sorts of intellectual jousts to French academics, Indian philosophers, or British parliamentarians.

On the other hand, Americans have a deep tradition of deciding things for themselves, of making up their minds after hashing out evidence first hand. Have you heard the joke about why Unitarians are such lousy singers? Because they're always looking ahead in the hymn to make sure they agree with the next verse. Americans are not inclined to accept something as true and binding just because the local squire, or political boss, or priest, or eminence says it is so. On our frontier the fiercely defended operating principle was "every man his own master," and today just as much as then we insist on judging the important questions for ourselves. That means listening to, and taking part in, lots of debates.

Those of you who have subscribed to *TAE* for a while know that one of our signatures is to present multiple, sometimes even contradictory, views on a given theme. Once in a while someone will ask, "Shouldn't you agree on an institutional position, a house policy, for all important questions?" Much more often, though, people tell me they like that our articles include varying swipes at the same subject.

A stark example of us debating with ourselves is the opening feature in this issue, where Patrick Buchanan and Ben Wattenberg face off over the subject of immigration. Both authors agree that the topic is of critical importance to our nation over the next generation. From there, they race off in polar-opposite directions. These two protagonists could hardly have staked out more different positions if we had put guns to their heads. (Don't worry: No weapons were used during the production of this particular issue.)

We haven't tried to solve this argument for you. All we aimed to do in our editing was to make each man's case as clear and hard and vivid as possible. *TAE* subscribers are grownups who can draw their own conclusions. Our job is to supply strong arguments and accurate data.

There is an important goal behind all this head-butting. Debates aren't bullfights; they are (at least in this country) much more than entertainments or intellectual spectacles. They are how we arrive at good and lasting decisions; they are a means of solving our most urgent and prickling problems. In the political arena conflict is useful. It exposes errors and lies; it hones truths to a fine edge.

The point of a serious debate isn't to find validity in each of the views on display, but rather to *discard* views—to *dump* the hypotheses that don't weather well after you've run them up the flagpole and let them flap in the breeze and bright sunshine for a while. The aim of political discussion and competition, as Thomas Jefferson said, is to insure that "truth and reason [maintain] their ground against false opinions in league with false fact."

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Ever rational, Jefferson was certain that "facts" will eventually "pierce through the veil drawn over them." And ever confident in the wisdom of the common man, Jefferson believed that, eventually, "the public judgment will correct false reasoning and opinions." If you know a better way to conduct the nation's business, let us know.

The point of a serious debate is to discard views that don't weather well after flapping in the breeze and bright sunshine for a while.

One of the real poisons in fashionable modern thinking is the claim that there is no truth, no facts, no reality, only many equally valid opinions. On pages 26-30 we look at the sharp disagreements on this question between C. S. Lewis and Sigmund Freud—two of the last century's most influential (and most divergent) thinkers.

The moral relativism which infests so much of today's intellectual and media class undermines the whole concept of debating. Debate, discussion, and political competition in general are pointless if there's ultimately no true or false answer, no definitely correct or incorrect claim. Do our trendiest college professors really believe it is just raw power, and not right ideas, that rules society in the end? If so, they may as well suspend classes and resort to rumbles on their college greens, letting proponents of different views have it out with clubs, chains, knives, and bookbags. (The ones with laptops in them are especially deadly.)

Christopher DeMuth, president of the American Enterprise Institute, the organization which sponsors this magazine, recently gave a speech reflecting on how a political "think tank" like AEI compares to a university. There are many similarities: Both provide opportunities for leading thinkers to research and write on current controversies. Both produce books, and monographs, and periodicals. Both are consulted by politicians, businesspeople, and others for specific expertise. (For sheer breadth, there is no beating a university.) Yet there are also sharp differences between the institutions. Perhaps foremost, DeMuth notes, our researchers cling to the old-fashioned conviction that problem solving

> requires not only intellectual skill and insight but also moral clarity. What distinguishes AEI scholars from others in the knowledge business, such as many university scholars, is our attempt to combine analysis with moral purpose. For us, ideas are not playthings to be toyed with and manipulated and paraded for their own sake. We are here because we have moved from mastery of a particular academic field to a moral calling.

Making intellectual judgments is an ethical process whether we admit it or not. As theologian Frank Boreham put it, "First we make our decisions, then our decisions make us." The debates you will encounter in the pages of this magazine are more than technical battles; they are collisions over what is right, good, true, and desirable.

Some of our debates match the wisdoms of different regions of the country, or classes of people, against each other (see Blake Hurst's spirited defense of heartland America against coastal haughtiness, on page 36). Some carefully compare one big ideal to another (faith vs. atheism, capitalism vs. democracy, socialism vs. traditional religion). Others—like our Buchanan/Wattenberg contest, or the warring environmental experts we describe starting on page 40—show how honest observers examining the same problems and same data can draw radically different conclusions, depending on their first principles.

It all makes for some great reading, and, we hope, help in solving certain national problems.

As we at *TAE* scramble to keep up with the interests of our readers, we try hard not to get stuck in our ways, and to remain eagle-eyed for better methods of doing things. The whole point of letting ideas compete against each other is to find improvements, even when it would be easier to leave things alone. *The American Enterprise* has never been more successful than it is today, yet I can promise you we will continue to refine, expand, and add features to this magazine.

Our two latest enhancements lie at your fingertips: We've just hired a talented new artist to sketch the portraits for our LIVE WITH *TAE* interviews. And starting with this issue we are reducing the density of type on our pages—to improve readability. This latter change created much tedious work for our art director, and the new format cuts the number of words we can fit in a layout. But we received a number of requests to make *TAE* easier on the eyes, and we aim to please.

Through the course of the year we solicit reader feedback in a number of ways: in certain of our subscription renewal notices; in my annual holiday letter; on our Web site; through letters to the editor. Some of the people who contact us say they don't believe I'm actually going to read their comments and pay attention. But I assure you we listen to your side of the conversation, and respond much more often than you might imagine.

So three cheers for constant debating, testing, arguing with ourselves, and talking back and forth, all across American life. And let's always have the courage to act on what these discussions show us needs to be done in the future. Because that, my friends, is the secret formula for progress.

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Sidelights

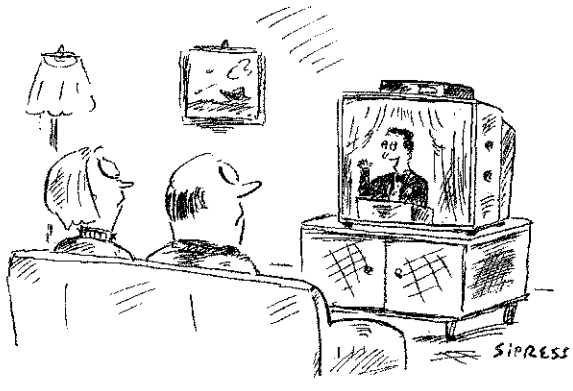
The online edition of the former official Soviet Communist Party paper *Pravda* ran an opinion piece by **Patrick Buchanan.** ❦ A Pew Center poll found that 47 percent of women and 53 percent of men favor higher military spending, and that 64 percent of women and 65 percent of men favor a missile-defense system. ··· A Harvard University poll found that 75 percent of Harvard undergraduates trust the military, and that 71 percent of male students would serve if the draft were reinstated. ❦ "Terrorists target not only our freedom of democracy but also freedom of trade," said Bolivian president **Jorge Quiroga.** "The more products, the more freedom of trade, the more globalization, the better." ❦ **Trevor Harvey**, head of the "anti-violence group" MAD DADS, was arrested for battery after he allegedly punched a referee at his seven-year-old son's flag football game.

At a speech at Princeton University, actor **Danny Glover** described America as "one of the main purveyors of violence in the world" and warned Americans that "we must stand vigilant against Bush in these times and work with the abolitionists." ··· **Peter Boyer** of *The New Yorker* describes **Jesse Jackson** as "an admirer of **Karl Marx.**" When Jackson visited Marx's grave "he realized that Marx was not the evil force that 'brainwashed' Americans were taught to believe but, rather, was driven by an Old Testament-style system of social justice." ··· **Harold Doley, Jr.,** one of the 100 wealthiest blacks in America, worked with Jesse Jackson's Wall Street Project and now describes Jackson's tactics as "a kind of RICO operation, both criminal and civil. It was racketeering." ❦ Over half of Americans feel that the National Rifle Association speaks for them at least some of the time, according to a recent Zogby poll. Sixty-six percent feel that people who passed a background check and took a safety course should be allowed to carry a gun on their persons or in their cars. ··· Forty-five percent of Americans value their Second Amendment rights "much more" or "somewhat more" since September 11, according to The Polling Company.

Only 43 percent of Americans approve of the media's coverage of the War on Terror, according to a Gallup poll. ··· Three out of four Americans prefer **George W. Bush** to **Al Gore** as the leader of the War on Terror, according to Andres McKenna Research. The same research showed that more Americans fear getting an IRS audit notice in the mail than fear receiving an anthrax-tainted item. ❦ Research by the European Commission found that the European Union's gross domestic product is less than two-thirds that of the U.S. ··· The EU is threatening Irish farmers with severe fines for producing too much milk. ··· The European Court of Justice has banned British shops from selling designer goods at reduced prices. ❦ Italians face a birth-control crisis with the introduction of the euro, because the nation's 6,500 condom vending machines don't accept the new money.

Italy's ambassador to Saudi Arabia, **Toruato Cardilli,** shocked his overwhelmingly Catholic countrymen by converting to Islam. ❦ Atheist **Mike Newdow** is trying to sue President George W. Bush for allowing Reverend **Franklin Graham** to refer to **Jesus Christ** in the President's inaugural prayer, claiming it violated the First Amendment. ··· Newdow had previously launched a failed suit to have the words "under God" removed from the Pledge of Allegiance, arguing, "if it said 'One nation under white people,' people would be offended. That's how I feel about the phrase 'under God.'" ❦ The Girl and Boy Scouts of Greater New York, the sole beneficiaries of royalties to **Irving Berlin**'s "God Bless America," can expect to benefit from the song's newfound popularity. "This year, we expect royalties to triple," said Irving Berlin Music Company spokesman **Bert Fink**, "generating well over $600,000 for the Scouts." ❦ Nine women in Eureka, California staged a "Strip-Tease for Trees" and distributed "goddess-based, nude Buddhist guerilla poetry" to lumberjacks in an attempt to halt a logging project.

—BB



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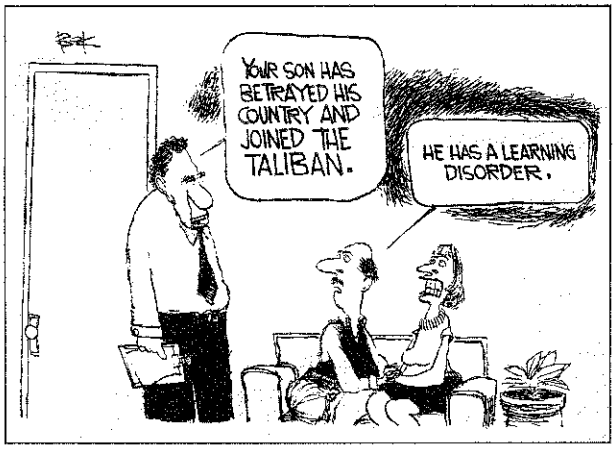

LIBERAL PARENTS, LOST CHILDREN

Authorities recently announced that John Walker Lindh will face a maximum of life in prison rather than a possible death penalty when he goes on trial for taking up arms against his own countrymen.

TAE contributing writer Ray Wisher—a police detective who works extensively with juvenile delinquents—offers these comments about Walker: "As I read about his upbringing, his passive '60s-leftover father and his vegetarian/shaman/free love/in-a-flower/from-a-comet mother, and then his interview describing why he liked the Islamic way, one thought kept coming back: Gangs. The gangbangers I deal with have parents who provide little structured discipline, and I repeatedly see such kids gravitate toward some alternate authority. They want rules, and somebody who cares enough about them to enforce those rules. Reading Walker's reasoning for why he chose such a hard-line organization, and then putting that up against his no-morals California background, makes his path seem fairly obvious. The boy was looking for a reason to live, for something to believe in, for something firm in his muddled existence."

American public life has recently seen a string of these pitiful lost children from permissive families. Before rudderless Johnny Walker there was sad Chandra Levy, and before her, pitiful Monica Lewinsky. Recall that all three of these California Gen-Xers came from wealthy households where children were few and showered with material indulgences, while rules and adult guidance were scarce. The highly educated professional parents lived in fashionable communities (Beverly Hills, Marin County), and adhered slavishly to trendy social views. Neither Johnny nor Chandra nor Monica were denied much of anything growing up—money, personal freedom, sexual license, overseas travel, whatever.

All three of these families were presided over by "nice," ridiculously weak mothers and fathers who dabbled in a veritable smorgasbord of moral codes. Johnny and Chandra and Monica had parents who experimented with Eastern mysticism, astrology, Buddhism, and several varieties of New Age mush. (Chandra is an Indian name, given to their daughter by the Levys after they spent time in India seeking their karma.)

In all three families there was endless psychologizing, counseling, and a sadly exaggerated confidence in medical solutions to moral problems. Mr. Levy and Mr. Lewinsky are classic science liberals (both are physicians) and each dispensed birth control pills to his own young daughter. Both Chandra's and Monica's families were aware they were having affairs with much older, married employers, without notable qualms.

Frank Lindh, a corporate lawyer, is gay. He and Johnny's mother, from whom he is now divorced, believed they should be nonjudgmental toward their son at all times. All of these parents have fallen away from the religions they were raised under themselves (Judaism and Catholicism).

As another *TAE* contributing writer, Rabbi Daniel Lapin, comments, "A son like Johnny, or a daughter like Chandra or Monica, never saw modeled for them, by a parent, what it means to have strong convictions about ultimate questions. They never knew the difference between sham convictions and authentic ones. Children raised this way grow up dangerously vulnerable to strong personalities like Gary Condit or Bill Clinton, or strong religions like Islam, or gurus and other substitutes for the guidance they never got at home. They are simply defenseless."

DIVERSE AMERICA

A recent Zogby poll of Muslim-Americans found that 79 percent believe our foreign policy led to the September 11 attacks. Only half of all U.S. Muslims support the current war against terrorism—versus close to 90 percent of Americans as a whole. Sulayman Nyang, co-director of Muslims in the American Public Square, described the findings as "troubling."

ILLEGALS AMONG US

At least three of the September 11 hijackers were illegal aliens living in the U.S. Several earlier terrorists were also illegal aliens from the Middle East, including Gazi Ibrahim Abu Mezer, who tried to bomb the New York City subway in 1997, and Mohammed Salameh, who took part in the first attack on the World Trade Center in 1993.

A new report from the U.S. Census

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NEW AGE CITIZEN'S ARREST

New Age "spiritual leader" Marianne Williamson's recently offered suggestions to a Manhattan Episcopal congregation on how to deal with Osama bin Laden, reproduced in New York *magazine:*

She entreated the audience to surround the city of New York with a divine shield of love, to make the world "vibrate at a level of love so high that nothing not love can touch it," and to place the terrorists in "holy quarantine."

"Every time you think of bin Laden, place around him a diamond egg. . . . The hate-filled thoughts and plans that might emanate from his consciousness can't get past the eggshell because it's a hard substance. But at the same time, the diamond light shines back upon him to heal him."

Bureau estimates that perhaps 91,000 people from Middle Eastern countries other than Israel were living in the United States illegally at the time of the 2000 census. This does not include Pakistan, which the Immigration and Naturalization Service previously estimated had more than 40,000 illegals in the United States. The figure for the Middle East also does not include North African countries such as Egypt and Algeria, which have sent a number of terrorists to the United States in the past. Africa as a whole accounts for perhaps 243,000 illegal aliens, according to the Census Bureau report. Overall, as many as 8.7 million illegal aliens may have been counted in the 2000 census.

One implication of this report is that current measures by the Justice Department to deport 6,000 Middle Eastern men who are here illegally will barely scratch the surface. Another lesson: Current efforts to scrutinize visa applications from Middle Eastern countries more carefully are not likely to be effective so long as hundreds of thousands of people are able to sneak or falsify their way into the U.S. due to lax immigration and border enforcement.

—**Steven Camarota** *is director of research at Washington, D.C.'s Center for Immigration Studies.*

THE MINETA MISTAKE

From Stuart Taylor's column in National Journal, *criticizing U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta for "a politically correct dogmatism, rooted in liberal ideology, that exposes us all to unnecessary danger of being slaughtered every time we board an airliner":*

Mineta asserted that 70-year-old white women should get the same scrutiny as young Muslim men, and ruled out any consideration of religion, ethnicity—or, he implied, national origin—in choosing whose bags to search. Security profiling, Mineta said, should be based on such things as "Did you pay cash for this ticket or charge it on a credit card? Do you have a one-way ticket or a round trip?"... "Did the terrorists who flew into the World Trade Center have one-way tickets?" "No," admitted Mineta. "They had round-trip tickets. Same thing with cash. They used credit cards. The profile did not work." Perhaps the Secretary should try something that *might* work.

THE MISSING ESKIMO FIREMAN

Less than 12 hours after the two planes crash into the World Trade Center, three firemen are caught on camera hoisting the American flag amidst the devastation and horror of Ground Zero. The picture, reminiscent of the famed Iwo Jima photo, becomes the perfect image for a statue commemorating the 343 firemen killed while saving others.

The New York City Fire Department commissions a design for a statue carefully modeled after the real-life photograph, incorporating virtually every detail. Well, not quite. You see, those three firemen happened to be white. So the statue was changed to give one firefighter a Hispanic face, another a black one.

But why did race have to be injected where it had no relevance? The fact that the statue is of *firemen*, not pastry chefs, by definition represents *all* firemen. The notion that specific racial categories are required to honor heroic deeds should be offensive to any American.

Besides, if racializing is so important, just think how insensitive this statue is. Represented are whites, blacks, and Hispanics. Surely there are Asian firefighters in this country. And some American Indians. And Indian Indians. And what about Arabs? What a sad fate: always portrayed as terrorists, never as firemen.

And does anyone think that, had the three firemen happened to be black, the PC forces would have clamored to make one of them white? Changing the races of any real-life men is un-American. It is racist. It is a historical lie. Thankfully, it is also offensive to New York firefighters and people across the country, whose protest has led the FDNY to reconsider the design. Whether a statue of the three firemen will be built at all is now in question. It is encouraging that a distortion of truth was rejected by many. But how sad that a truthful depiction is still up for debate, when it should be the only choice.

JAPANESE MEMORY CHIPS FALL WHERE THEY MAY

In the early 1990s, an active group of magazine writers, left-wing sociologists, Washington string-pullers, nutty professors, and Santa Monica socialists—people like James Fallows, Eamonn Fingleton, Chalmers Johnson, Michael Lewis, Robert Kuttner, John Judis, Pat Choate, Derek Shearer, Ezra Vogel, Karel van Wolferen, John Zysman, and Clyde Prestowitz—aggressively promoted the idea that Japanese businesses were going to eat the lunch of their American counterparts. They declared this was because

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the Japanese were wise enough to let all-seeing government regulators steer and subsidize their industries, while Americans practiced crude free-market capitalism. (The whole point of their argument was to encourage increased government control of the U.S. private sector.)

In the decade since these unfortunate sages issued their maxims, the Japanese economy has collapsed as a result of accumulated government meddling. Figures recently showed, for instance, that over the last five years the Japanese market share in computer memory chips tumbled from 44 percent to 28 percent, while the U.S. share rose briskly. The U.S. now exceeds Japan even in this technology once thought perfectly suited to Japanese strengths.

The articles, books, and papers of the "Japan as #1" herd now make for comical reading. If these armchair industrialists had had their way, America's 1990s could have been like Japan's (a 15 percent total rise in gross domestic product), instead of the free-market explosion we enjoyed (40 percent growth).

We wouldn't be so rude as to point this out except that a) these activists were extremely aggressive a decade ago in attacking anyone who pointed out the holes in their argument (as *TAE* editors did), and b) none of these advocates have acknowledged that the course they urged on this nation—and at certain points they were close to winning in Washington—was catastrophically wrong.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN SCANDINAVIA

A Finnish business executive was recently given a $103,000 fine for driving 15 miles per hour over the speed limit near Helsinki. In Finland, traffic fines are determined by the violator's income.

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WE GROW WEARY OF LES PIPSQUEAKS

As the nation mulls its next target in the war on terrorism, it's time to consider another Petri dish of ferocious anti-American hatred and terrorist activity: We've got to attack France.

Having exhausted itself in a spirited fight with the Nazis in the last war, France cannot now work up the energy to oppose terrorism. France has nurtured, coddled, and funded Islamic terrorists for decades. Five years after Muslim terrorists assassinated 11 Israeli athletes and one German policeman at the 1972 Olympics, French counterespionage agents acting on intelligence from Israeli police arrested the reputed mastermind of the massacre, Abu Daoud. Both Israel and West Germany sought the extradition of Daoud. But afraid of upsetting Muslim terrorists, France refused on technical grounds and set him free.

In 1986, Libyan agents of Muammar Qaddafi planted a bomb in a West Berlin discotheque, killing an American serviceman and a Turkish woman. Hundreds more were injured. President Reagan retaliated with air strikes against Libyan military targets—including Qaddafi's living quarters. Quaking in the face of this show of manly force, France denied America the use of its airspace. As a consequence, American pilots were required to begin their missions from airbases in Britain and to fly far around the borders of France. When the pilots finally made it to Tripoli, tired from the long flights, they bombed the French embassy by mistake. So sorry!

France has repeatedly decried economic sanctions against Iraq and has accused the United Nations (the U.N.! not the Great Satan U.S.) of manufacturing evidence against Saddam Hussein. The French U.N. ambassador dismissed aerial photographs of Iraqi military trucks fleeing inspection sites just before U.N. weapons inspectors arrived as "perhaps a truckers' picnic."

Earlier this year France connived with human-rights champions China and Cuba to toss the United States off the U.N. Human Rights Commission. Sudan took America's place, and if its diplomats are not too bogged down with torture and slave trading, they are very much looking forward to attending the meetings.

This summer, Parisians actually made Mumia Abu-Jamal an honorary citizen of Paris. The convicted Philadelphia cop-killer has been sitting on death row (and giving radio interviews and college commencement addresses) for 20 years. Evi-

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FLYNT'S LOCK ON THE DEMOCRATS

Andrew Cuomo (son of Democratic saint Mario Cuomo) is running for governor of New York. He recently put together a fundraiser in Beverly Hills sponsored by slime pornographer Larry Flynt. Oh, did we mention? Cuomo also worked in the Clinton administration.

dence of America's cowboy, bloodlust, rush-to-judgment approach to the death penalty, obviously.

Two weeks into America's war on terrorism last fall, *Le Figaro* began calling for "American restraint." Only 17 percent of the French said they believed the U.S. military action was working (which was—admittedly—17 percent more than on the *New York Times* editorial page). In keeping with France's well-established reputation as a fearsome fighting machine, the French foreign minister immediately advised the United States to stop bombing Afghanistan.

The first indictment to come out of the September 11 attacks was of a French national—Zacarias Moussaoui. He is believed to be the intended 20th hijacker on Bloody Tuesday. France quickly moved to provide consular protection to Moussaoui. French Justice Minister Marylise Lebranchu has demanded that Moussaoui not be executed.

It's annoying enough when the French refuse to extradite terrorists on the grounds that America does not observe the pristine judicial formalities of their pals China, Cuba, and the Sudan. But under what zany theory of international law does France think it can tell us what to do with a terrorist already here on U.S. soil? The Great Satan is wearying of this reverse hegemony, in which pip-squeak nations try to impose their pip-squeak values on us.

Now, as America goes about building support for action against Iraq, guess who's complaining? The turtlenecked chickens are terrified of offending fanatic Muslims and inviting a terrorist attack. While France whines, Turkey—a predominantly Muslim country—is preparing its airstrips to assist a possible U.S. strike at Saddam Hussein.

The conclusion is inescapable: We must attack France. What are they going to do? Fight back?

—**Ann Coulter** *is a nationally syndicated columnist.*

KILLING CHILDHOOD

Among the items Kmart is offering in new clothing lines aimed at teenage girls: thong underwear, sheer tank tops and panties, and push-up bras. J. C. Penney is doing big teen business with cleavage-enhancing and strapless "stick-on" bras. Lingerie and underwear in black, red, and lace, plus tank tops in mesh, are being pushed on adolescents by apparel retailers. Bloomingdale's is selling aqua, sheer pink, and purple g-strings to teenagers for $5 each (or four for $18). "It's fun to be in our stores now," burbles Penney's manager Cecilia McDermott, adding, "I'm hoping it's the older teens.... Maybe that's my wishful thinking."

NO EXCUSES

Nobody admits it, but the real dispute in public education today is whether schools full of poor kids can be excellent. A few mold-breaking institutions prove they can, but it requires a departure from the liberal orthodoxies of today's public-school bureaucracies.

A recent *Washington Post* story reports that Ronald Ross, superintendent in Mount Vernon, New York, one of the state's poorest and worst-performing school districts, has dramatically improved fourth-graders' test scores in just three years. In 1999, only 35 percent of Mount Vernon's public-school fourth-graders met state test standards in English; in 2001, a whopping 74 percent passed, "a rate rivaling those of many of New York's wealthiest school districts." In math, the passing rate rocketed from 51 percent to 79 percent.

The simple changes Ross made in the city's elementary schools included:

- assigning each school an assistant principal and a nurse in order to free principals "to focus on instruction"
- giving free bicycles donated by local merchants to students who read 50 or more books a year
- giving teachers "more training and weekly planning sessions" with reading specialists and administrators
- giving fourth-graders "weekend homework modeled on the standardized tests."

If these mild correctives caused English scores to rise 111 percent in three years, then imagine the potential in other schools across the country.

Yet the *Post* reports all this progress with frightened claims that "top school officials worry" the new federal education law "takes a good thing—testing and accountability—too far." You see, objective standards and accountability could encourage reactionary reforms like back-to-basics curricula, firm discipline, and renewed emphasis on personal responsibility.

Consider another education success story printed elsewhere in the same day's *Post*: A Chicago public high school in a bad neighborhood "has one of the highest attendance rates, one of the lowest chronic truancy rates, and some of the highest standardized test scores" in the city. Its secret? Though public, it is run as a military school, and uses the Army's Junior ROTC program to help teach kids and form them into decent citizens.

The *Post* reports outrage over plans to replicate this successful school in a black suburb of Washington, D.C. One local politician objects that "putting a military school in a poor, black community makes it too inviting for these youngsters to go out and volunteer for the military." Worse, "staff members at the school say they were not consulted

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enough before the decision was made."

The school in Chicago "heard the same complaints" from the school establishment, but local backers forced the program through in an effort to save students like Lavin Curry. When he arrived at the military high school, Curry "couldn't live with his mother," had "never met his father," and was nearly expelled after he came in drunk one morning and "passed out in a school bathroom." But gradually "he realized that his teachers had simply been trying to give him what he needed: Some order in his life."

"They changed my life," he says. "They fought for me to stay in school. They really cared about me." Now he doesn't drink or smoke, earns A's and B's, plays chess and football, has a part-time job, and has "begun talking about college, maybe even law school." He's also noticed another benefit of military school: "I don't have to worry about somebody jumping me in the hallways." Nor do the benefits stop at the schoolhouse door: "I feel proud when I go out in my uniform. There's something about wearing it. You carry yourself differently."

Now if only the politicians, bureaucrats, and pundits who insist on warehousing poor kids in conventional public schools would think differently about what Curry and his peers are capable of achieving.

—**Scott Walter** *wrote about a military public high school in our Jan/Feb 2001 issue.*

GUNS UP, HARM DOWN

Some recent data on guns, violence, and gun control that you may not have heard on the evening news: Between 1993 and 1997, according to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, the number of homicides committed with a firearm dropped by 27 percent, while the number of firearm-related injuries fell 38 percent. During that same period, the number of guns in America *increased* by nearly 10 percent, according to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms.

Meanwhile, a study published not long ago in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* looked at the effectiveness of the Brady Act's mandatory five-day waiting period for anyone wanting to buy a gun. The study found no evidence the Brady Act had a significant effect in reducing either murder or suicide rates.

Law-abiding citizens rely on firearms to defend themselves against criminals as many as 2.5 million times a year, while the annual number of crimes committed with a gun is under 400,000.

PROSPERITY IS THEIR TASK, NOT OURS

One of the new cliches of the post-Taliban age is that we must not "betray" Afghanistan by walking away after the enemy has been defeated. We should build up the nation's destroyed economy, it is said, with that ultimate cure-all: a Marshall Plan.

Indeed, we are already trying to reconstruct another largely Muslim territory the United States helped liberate—Kosovo. And we are holding out such a promise for Iraq, should it yield. How many other countries could qualify for rich development aid?

It's worth repeating that major social engineering is beyond our (or anyone's) capacity. One of the most important lessons of the failure of the Great Society social programs—launched in a much more favorable environment than that of any poor foreign nation today—is that deep-seated social and economic problems cannot be erased with easy money. Our social engineering capabilities are even more limited in the Third World. The so-called developing nations are already littered with the grand failures and tiny successes of our multi-billion-dollar efforts to help them jump from subsistence agrarian economies into modernity.

We have long been too optimistic, to the point of hubris, about our ability to bring other nations into a modern economic and political age. When we helped Western Europe get back on its feet after World War II we were dealing with people who had a high level of education, science, and technology, and established industrial economies. In contrast, countries like Afghanistan have almost no base to build on.

Moreover, there is no truth to the implied idea that economic development will prevent Islamic radicalization. Iran's economy is much better off than Afghanistan's, yet Iran has harbored and sponsored many terrorists. The 19 hijackers who assaulted the United States on September 11 were not from poor but middle-class backgrounds. Bin Laden's family, of course, are billionaires.

It is an elementary fact that some cultures are less amenable to modern development than others. Trying to fast-forward development in Islamic countries is particularly unrewarding. There are compelling humanitarian reasons for us to send medication and food to Afghanistan, to help get the lights turned back on and the water pumping again. But such aid will not bring economic development a day closer, will buy us no love, and will not protect us, or the Afghans, from virulent Islam.

—**Amitai Etzioni** *is a professor at George Washington University.*

ONE MORE FACTION WHIPS CONGRESS

If you thought the explosion of special-interest lobbies in Washington couldn't go any further, think again. The latest group to open a D.C. office is the "National Coalition for Sexual Freedom." The group represents "members of the Sado-Masochist-Leather-Fetish community."

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"Live" with TAE

He won six Emmy Awards as a CBS News correspondent. But when he blew the whistle on media bias, the TV establishment savaged him. Now he has a best-selling book that documents his charges.

Bernard Goldberg

In 1996, Bernard Goldberg wrote a story for the Wall Street Journal *arguing that TV network news coverage was tilted in a liberal direction. To most viewers of Tom Brokaw, Peter Jennings, and Dan Rather, this didn't come as a revelation. "I said out loud what millions of TV news viewers all over America know and have been complaining about for years," says Goldberg. "That too often, Dan and Peter and Tom and a lot of their foot soldiers don't deliver the news straight, that they have a liberal bias, and that no matter how often the network stars deny it, it is true."*

What made Goldberg's argument new was that he was blowing the whistle on his own business. Having worked at CBS News as a national correspondent since 1972 (appearing on Rather's evening news broadcasts as well as "48 Hours"), Goldberg was the ultimate news insider—lending weight to his complaint (one he says has concerned him for years, and that he often voiced to colleagues).

The fact that Bernard Goldberg isn't a conservative—he backed George McGovern, voted against Ronald Reagan, supports the Roe v. Wade *decision, and favors homosexual rights—only strengthens the legitimacy of his complaint.*

But among CBS News brass, Goldberg's argument made him persona non grata. *Rather stopped speaking to him. "To Dan Rather dissent was betrayal," states Goldberg. Some veterans, though, supported him. Andy Rooney sent this typed message: "Bernie: In the future, if you have any derogatory remarks to make about CBS News or one of your co-workers.... I hope you'll do the same thing again."*

In 1998, Goldberg was turned down for a correspondent slot when "60 Minutes II" was being launched (executive producer Jeff Fager told him, "I'll never be able to put that Wall Street Journal *story behind me"), so he opted to leave the network. He began working on his recently released book* Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distort the News. *In it, Goldberg tells how the news is made, and names names.*

TAE *associate editor John Meroney visited with Goldberg on the day that* Bias *landed in the number one spot on the* New York Times *best-seller list.*

If one of the three big news networks tried giving balanced liberal and conservative views, it would stand out immediately.

TAE: The title of your book is *Bias*. Do you believe that network news reporters really skew their stories to reflect favorably on Tom Daschle and the issues he favors?

GOLDBERG: There is some bias in the coverage of political parties, but that's not really my concern. The worst bias exists in the way big social issues are covered. Take, for instance, the negative effect that day care has on children. It's the most important story you never saw on TV.

TAE: You assert in your book that the absence of mothers from American homes is without any historical precedent, and millions upon millions of children have been left with dire consequences because of it. If this is such an important subject for the nation, why has it been ignored by producers and correspondents?

GOLDBERG: It's not an easily reported story. It requires original thinking. Look, lots of us in news are lazy. "There's no culture of ideas around here" is the way one CBS News executive puts it. And it's also ignored because it cuts against the grain of liberalism.

If the evening newscasts did stories saying the country is paying a high price for having two parents work outside the home—that suicide, sexual problems, and alcoholism are up as

Illustration by Sam Toronto

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a result, and here's what happens when children are left to fend for themselves—some women would resent those stories. They probably feel a little guilty anyway, especially if they're working when they really don't need the money. And anchors don't like the idea of feminists getting angry at them. Anchors are like politicians in Washington, except they campaign for re-election five nights a week.

Good reporters should be saying "We want to tell you about this trend because it's important." Why not do some reports about the parent who doesn't want to work outside the home? Reporters ought to be doing segments about changing the tax code so both parents don't feel they need to work. I haven't seen any stories about that.

But if the subject is day care, the most likely view in newsrooms is, "What do we need to do to make day care more accessible?" Instead, why not ask questions about what needs to be done for the parents who want to stay home with their children?

TAE: Why didn't you report those kinds of stories?

GOLDBERG: I've done reports about how women use children as pawns in divorce cases. How's that for contrarian? Overwhelmingly, networks don't have stories like that. They prefer the same old deadbeat dad piece instead of the one about the angry mother who's making visitation difficult. There's this prism that distorts the view, and more often than not it's liberal.

TAE: You say another way bias manifests itself is in the way news sources are identified.

GOLDBERG: Conservatives are always labeled and identified as conservative, because reporters think viewers need to know. But for some strange reason, they don't think viewers should know who the liberals are. Conservatives are often called "right-wing," but the only time the news media utter the words "left-wing" is when they're talking about an airplane.

Look at what happened during the Clinton impeachment trial, for example. As senators signed the oath book, Peter Jennings had his own running commentary on the air. He described Mitch McConnell as "Senator Mitch McConnell, very determined conservative member of the Republican Party." Barbara Mikulski was merely "Senator Mikulski of Maryland." Santorum? Jennings described him as, "Senator Rick Santorum, one of the younger members of the Senate, Republican, very determined conservative member of the Senate." Daschle? "That's Senator Daschle there in your picture." New York liberal Democrat Charles Schumer was just "Senator Schumer." And on and on it went.

In the media, conservatives are always labeled, and identified as being conservative. But for some strange reason, reporters don't think viewers should know who the liberals are.

TAE: So what's the mindset behind that?

GOLDBERG: It's one that says, conservatives are out of the mainstream and need to be identified, whereas liberals are the mainstream and don't require explanation. It's just like in the bad old days when journalists were doing crime stories, and the only time they'd identify a suspect by race was if he was black. Blacks were alien. Dangerous. That was part of the times.

Conservatives are identified today for the same reason. The view of most people currently in the news business is that conservatives aren't in the mainstream—just the way black people weren't.

TAE: What kind of response to your book have you received from your colleagues in the news business?

GOLDBERG: Well, I've heard from colleagues past and present who are complimentary. Then there's another group, made up of the anchors of the three major network evening news programs, and the presidents of those news divisions, who refuse to comment, which is interesting because it's an aspect of their business that many people obviously care about. They are certain the only people who are concerned about a liberal bias in the news are right-wing nuts.

TAE: What do your critics think accounts for the success of the book?

GOLDBERG: They won't acknowledge that it has anything to do with my arguments. They believe it's because I write about some famous and influential people such as Dan Rather. Maybe they're in denial. Or maybe they're just arrogant. Regardless, they seem to have convinced themselves that bias in the news isn't an important issue.

TAE: Speaking of Dan Rather, the portrait you paint of him isn't very flattering.

GOLDBERG: Actually, I say there are two sides to Dan. He's funny, generous, and a true patriot. And also ruthless and unforgiving. In the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing, Connie Chung scooped him. But even though she was his col-

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league at CBS News, he trashed her. Dan was so incensed that Connie was on the air first and getting all the airtime that when he finally arrived in Oklahoma City, he spent hours and hours on the phone with TV writers, blasting her as a second-rate journalist.

TAE: In the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, Dan Rather came off as a flag-waver, even crying on "The Late Show with David Letterman," and announcing that if President Bush wanted him to go and fight, Rather would say, "Where do I get in line?" How does that kind of behavior play among broadcast journalists?

GOLDBERG: Regardless of what Dan's many critics may say, I'm convinced that all of his emotion is genuine. I remember when I filed a report about the Vietnam Memorial in Washington and Dan had to fight back tears on the air.

TAE: But in 1996, when you called to tell him that you were writing your story for the *Wall Street Journal* about slanted news reports, he seemed to think you were questioning his patriotism.

GOLDBERG: Yes, it was strange. I still can't figure what that reaction was all about. His voice started quavering and he told me how he'd signed up twice with the Marines during peacetime. Then it hit me: He was essentially saying, "How could you accuse me of this? I'm a patriot!" That's a sad indication of how far liberalism has fallen: Liberals are afraid that if you say they're liberal, you're saying they're unpatriotic. I wasn't arguing that at all.

TAE: You leave Walter Cronkite out of your book, with whom you've also been associated, who also became infamous for making on-camera insinuations against conservatives.

GOLDBERG: Look, this book isn't a history. But if there was a bias problem when Cronkite was the anchorman on the news, I didn't notice it. Maybe I wasn't paying attention. But it seems to me our coverage of Watergate and Vietnam was much different than the way network news has covered feminism, the homeless, and homosexuals more recently.

TAE: Why do most journalists tend to be left of center in their political philosophy?

GOLDBERG: Certain types of people gravitate into certain kinds of fields. Generally speaking, liberals go into the arts and related professions. Some see journalism as a way to change the world. That's a residue of the 1960s attitude that said, "We're going to change everything."

Years ago, Tom Shales called me "one of the brainiest network news correspondents." But then I did an AIDS documentary he didn't like and from then on he started writing negatively about me.

TAE: Is that why you went into journalism?

GOLDBERG: No. I've always believed that if you want to afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted, then go into social work or the ministry. Don't go into journalism, because sometimes the underdog is where he is because he put himself in that position and doesn't deserve our sympathy. Plus, I really don't want journalists trying to remake the world. What if the world they want is the opposite of the one other Americans desire? Journalists should give us intelligent views from both ends of the political spectrum when they're reporting.

TAE: Is the increased desire of the networks to make money on news programs having a negative effect on reporting?

GOLDBERG: We didn't used to play by entertainment industry rules, that's for sure. If one wanted to do a documentary on Social Security reform, the network would air it and executives rightly felt they were serving the public good by giving exposure to important issues. "CBS Reports" was the most famous documentary series in TV history, and it doesn't exist any more, for the very reason that the network can't make money with it. If one wants to do an hour-long program on welfare reform today, forget it. It ain't going to happen.

TAE: "60 Minutes" was the program that made news profitable, but it still does some pretty solid stories.

GOLDBERG: Sure, I'll concede that. It's responsible for the infotainment trend, but it still manages to maintain high standards.

TAE: Ratings have consistently left Dan Rather in third place. Why hasn't he been fired?

GOLDBERG: Mainly it's because CBS News doesn't have anyone of his stature groomed for that anchor position. The guys in Hollywood now make all those kinds of calls, and there's no way CBS Entertainment president Leslie Moonves is going to let correspondent John Roberts take over, even though he's quite good. Dan Rather is a huge name in this business, and despite being in third place, that position on the evening news is negligible in terms of advertising money. By contrast, the difference between third and second place on the *morning* news programs is huge. That's just the way the business works.

TAE: Of all the journalists in network news,

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whom do you consider to be the most objective?

GOLDBERG: On NBC, Tim Russert does a very good job. John Stossel and Ted Koppel over at ABC are good, too. On CBS, Mike Wallace and Morley Safer are at the top of their game.

TAE: How will the success of the 24-hour cable news channels influence the evening network newscasts?

GOLDBERG: Cable news has taken viewers away. But it hasn't had an effect on the content of the network broadcasts. I'm convinced that if one of the three big networks tried giving balanced liberal and conservative views, it would begin to stand out, and within a week we'd all notice the difference.

TAE: Some of your harshest critics, such as Tom Shales of the *Washington Post*, have argued that you've written this book because you were a failure as a correspondent and want to get back at your bosses.

GOLDBERG: I won six Emmy Awards for my work at CBS News, and I was the lead correspondent on a program that won a Peabody Award.

Years ago, Tom Shales called me "one of the brainiest network news correspondents." He seemed to be a big fan. But back when AIDS was emerging, I did a one-hour documentary where I interviewed a bisexual man who infected his wife and she later died. I asked this man, "Do you think you killed her?" Mr. Shales was offended by that question, and from then on started writing negatively about me.

TAE: Speaking of AIDS, in *Bias* you criticize coverage of the disease, citing news reports that said AIDS was going to threaten everyone, when the reality was far from that: It was only harmful to people who behaved in certain dangerous ways.

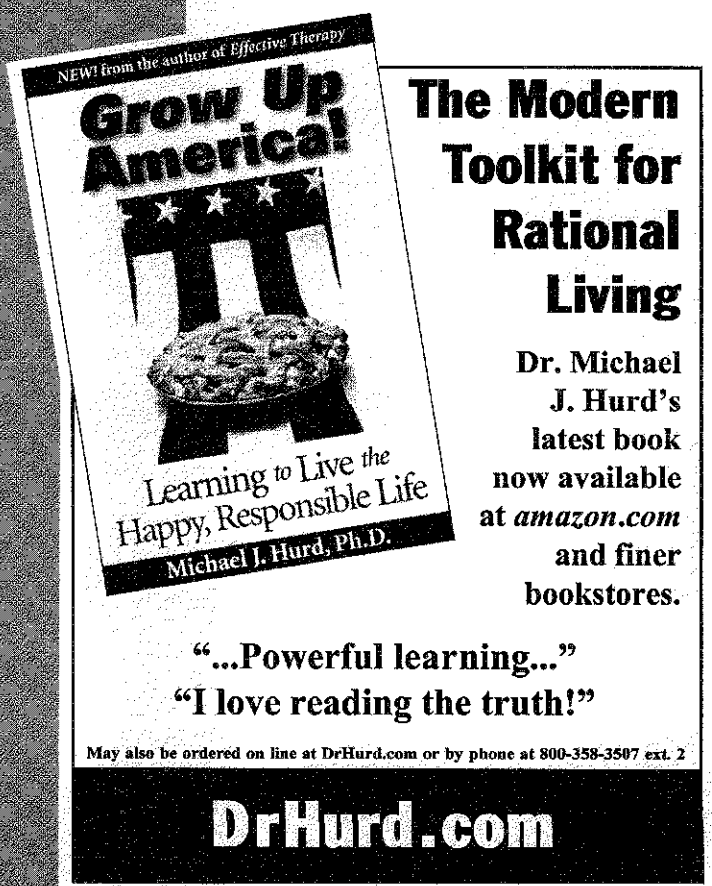
GOLDBERG: Remember all those news reports saying that heterosexuals were going to be the next victims after homosexuals and drug addicts? After a while, reporters should have looked around and said, "Where are all those heterosexuals who are supposed to be dying?" The reason they didn't is because gay rights is a cause the media elites want to champion.

Their position was, "What do we have to lose by getting the general population frightened?" Maybe that will help find a cure. Reporters and producers are very selective about the groups with which they take this approach. Can you imagine them working on the side of pro-life activists?

TAE: You also assert that network news is slanted when it comes to crime and punishment stories. You cite as an example CBS coverage of a prison chain gang in Alabama where all but one prisoner was black. A producer objected to showing it, saying that the network shouldn't give viewers the impression that so many prisoners were black.

GOLDBERG: That story is symbolic of how political correctness colors the news. CBS News wanted a quick story with compelling pictures showing people in chains working out in the hot sun. They got more than they bargained for. But only two types of people are going to believe that all blacks are criminals: bigots and morons. And I really don't think network news producers should be filtering the news for their viewers.

The negative effect that day care has on children is the most important story you never saw on TV.



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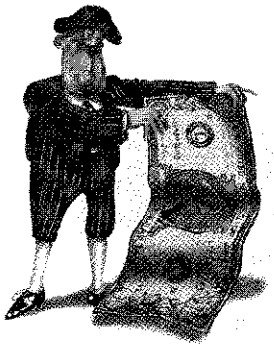
Forward Observer

James Glassman



Booboo Economics

At last, we're headed for an honest debate between two different approaches to tax policy. The question on the table: Are higher taxes good or bad for an economy that has slowed down?

The battle is being joined because the Congressional Budget Office has pared its projections of U.S. budget surpluses. Last January, the projected surplus over the next ten years stood at $5.6 trillion. That number was re-estimated at $1.8 trillion in December.

Why the decline? Three reasons. Because it uses "static analysis" (simply viewing tax cuts as straight revenue reductions, ignoring any economic acceleration created by the lower levies), the CBO estimates that the tax cuts enacted in June will deprive Washington of $1.3 trillion over the next decade. Second, the economy has moved into a recession that economists did not factor in a year ago. And, third, the terrorist attacks of September 11 have led to boosts in federal spending.

In a speech on January 4, Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle called the federal surplus decline "the most dramatic fiscal deterioration in our nation's history." That's nonsense. The decline may even be beneficial, since it could prevent legislators from embarking on the spending sprees that surpluses provoke.

But the argument presented in this speech by Daschle—the nation's top elected Democratic official—is important. He defined a fiscal position that is economically erroneous and politically perilous.

Daschle asserted "the rapidly disappearing surplus is a key reason long-term interest rates have barely budged" despite reductions in short-term rates by the Federal Reserve. "Investors understand that the dwindling surplus means the federal government may have to borrow money soon or, at the very least, won't be paying down nearly as much of the debt as had been expected. That is keeping rates higher than they would have been." Thus, tax cuts "probably made the recession worse."

This argument comes straight from the playbook of Clinton Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin. Rubin believes that a hike in marginal tax rates on the most productive Americans is what ignited the economic boom of the 1990s. His logic goes like this:

- Lower taxes do not stimulate the economy. They don't change people's patterns of work or behavior. They simply deprive the Treasury of money, leading to lower surpluses or higher deficits.
- Lower surpluses or higher deficits mean that interest rates will rise because the federal government crowds out other borrowers, who have to offer their debt at higher rates in order to attract lenders.
- These higher interest rates damage the economy, causing recessions.
- The solution is higher taxes.

After Daschle's speech, President Bush responded that taxes would be raised (or the previous cuts rescinded) "over my dead body!" Bush wants *more* tax cuts as the best cure for economic slowdown. So the battle lines have been drawn.

Daschle and Rubin are promoting what could be called Booboo Economics—because it's based on an intellectual mistake, a big fallacy. Paul Evans of Ohio State University has shown that there is no evidence that higher deficits are correlated with higher interest rates. AEI economists Charles Calomiris and Kevin Hassett demonstrate, likewise, that Japanese and U.S. interest rates have followed almost precisely the same patterns even though Japanese government debt soared and U.S. government debt fell. Look at Rubin's own era for further evidence: In 1996, with a federal deficit of $108 billion, the long-term bond averaged 6.2 percent; in 2000, with a surplus of $236 billion (a record), the bond averaged 6.5 percent.

Why don't federal borrowing levels dictate interest rates as Rubin suggests? Many reasons, but here's one that non-economists can understand: Federal debt is a small piece of a big pie. According to the latest Federal Reserve data, American people and institutions owe a total of about $19 trillion. Even if the federal debt rises by $200 billion in a year, the overall effect is to raise total national debt by just 1 percent.

What really counts in fiscal policy is not whether the government is collecting more than it spends but whether it is spending too much.

Lower taxes leave more dollars in the hands of individual Americans to invest and spend. Raising taxes in the middle of a slowdown is a good way to send the economy into a depression.

Is that the result you had in mind, Mr. Daschle?

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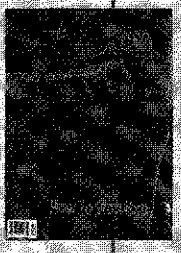

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Immigration: a *Cause* of the Clash of Civilizations ...Or a *Solution* To It?

Patrick Buchanan vs. Ben Wattenberg

Patrick Buchanan: Shields up!

In 1821, a newly independent Mexico invited Americans to settle in its northern province of Texas—on two conditions: Americans must embrace Roman Catholicism, and they must swear allegiance to Mexico. Thousands took up the offer. But, in 1835, after the tyrannical General Santa Anna seized power, the Texans, fed up with loyalty oaths and fake conversions, and outnumbering Mexicans in Texas ten to one, rebelled and kicked the tiny Mexican garrison back across the Rio Grande.

Santa Anna led an army north to recapture his lost province. At a mission called the Alamo, he massacred the first rebels who resisted. Then he executed the 400 Texans who surrendered at Goliad. But at San Jacinto, Santa Anna blundered straight into an ambush. His army was butchered, he was captured. The Texans demanded his execution for the Alamo massacre, but Texas army commander Sam Houston had another idea. He made the dictator an offer: his life for Texas. Santa Anna signed. And on his last day in office, Andrew Jackson recognized the independence of the Lone Star Republic.

Eight years later, the U.S. annexed the Texas republic. An enraged Mexico disputed the American claim to all land north of the Rio Grande, so President James Polk sent troops to the north bank of the river. When Mexican soldiers crossed and fired on a U.S. patrol, Congress declared war. By 1848, soldiers with names like Grant, Lee, and McClellan were in the city of Montezuma. A humiliated Mexico was forced to cede all of Texas, the Southwest, and California. The U.S. gave Mexico $15 million to ease the anguish of amputation.

Pat Buchanan

Mexicans seethed with hatred and resentment, and in 1910 the troubles began anew. After a revolution that was anti-church and anti-American, U.S. sailors were roughed up and arrested in Tampico. In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson ordered the occupation of Vera Cruz by U.S. Marines. As Wilson explained to the British ambassador, "I am going to teach the South Americans to elect good men." When the bandit Pancho Villa led a murderous raid into New Mexico in 1916, Wilson sent General Pershing and 10,000 troops to do the tutoring.

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Despite FDR's Good Neighbor Policy, President Cárdenas nationalized U.S. oil companies in 1938—an event honored in Mexico to this day. Pemex was born, a state cartel that would collude with OPEC in 1999 to hike up oil prices to $35 a barrel. American consumers, whose tax dollars had supported a $50 billion bailout of a bankrupt Mexico in 1994, got gouged.

The point of this history? Mexico has an historic grievance against the United States that is felt deeply by her people. This is one factor producing deep differences in attitudes toward America between today's immigrants from places like Mexico and the old immigrants from Ireland, Italy, and Eastern Europe. With fully one-fifth of all people of Mexican ancestry now residing in the United States, and up to 1 million more crossing the border every year, we need to understand these differences.

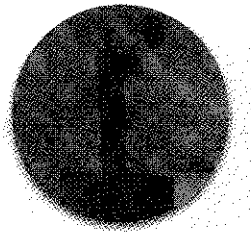
1. The number of people pouring in from Mexico is larger than any wave from any country ever before. In the 1990s alone, the number of people of Mexican heritage living in the U.S. grew by 50 percent to at least 21 million. The Founding Fathers wanted immigrants to spread out among the population to ensure assimilation, but Mexican Americans are highly concentrated in the Southwest.

2. Mexicans are not only from another culture, but of another race. History has taught that different races are far more difficult to assimilate than different cultures. The 60 million Americans who claim German ancestry are fully assimilated, while millions from Africa and Asia are still not full participants in American society.

3. Millions of Mexicans broke the law to get into the United States, and they break the law every day they remain here. Each year, 1.6 million illegal aliens are apprehended, almost all of them at our bleeding southern border.

4. Unlike the immigrants of old, who bade farewell to their native lands forever, millions of Mexicans have no desire to learn English or become U.S. citizens. America is not their home; they are here to earn money. They remain proud Mexicans. Rather than assimilate, they create their own radio and TV stations, newspapers, films, and magazines. They are becoming a nation within a nation.

5. These waves of Mexican immigrants are also arriving in a different America than did the old immigrants. A belief in racial rights and ethnic entitlements has taken root among America's minorities and liberal elites. Today, ethnic enclaves are encouraged and ethnic chauvinism is rife in the barrios. Anyone quoting Calvin Coolidge's declaration that "America must remain American" today would be charged with a hate crime.



Theodore Roosevelt warned, "The one absolutely certain way of bringing this nation to ruin…would be to permit it to become a tangle of squabbling nationalities."

Harvard professor Samuel P. Huntington, author of *The Clash of Civilizations*, calls migration "the central issue of our time." He has warned in the pages of this magazine:

> If 1 million Mexican soldiers crossed the border, Americans would treat it as a major threat to their national security.... The invasion of over 1 million Mexican civilians...would be a comparable threat to American societal security, and Americans should react against it with vigor.

Mexican immigration is a challenge to our cultural integrity, our national identity, and potentially to our future as a country. Yet, American leaders are far from reacting "with vigor," even though a Zogby poll found that 72 percent of Americans want less immigration, and a Rasmussen poll in July 2000 found that 89 percent support English as America's official language. The people want action. The elites disagree—and do nothing. Despite our braggadocio about being "the world's only remaining superpower," the U.S. lacks the fortitude to defend its borders and to demand, without apology, that immigrants assimilate to its society.

Perhaps our mutual love of the dollar can bridge the cultural chasm, and we shall all live happily in what Ben Wattenberg calls the First Universal Nation. But Uncle Sam is taking a hellish risk in importing a huge diaspora of tens of millions of people from a nation vastly different from our own. It is not a decision we can ever undo. Our children will live with the consequences. "If assimilation fails," Huntington recognizes, "the United States will become a cleft country with all the potentials for internal strife and disunion that entails." Is that a risk worth taking?

A North American Union of Canada, Mexico, and the United States has been proposed by Mexican President Fox, with a complete opening of borders to the goods and peoples of the three countries. The *Wall Street Journal* is enraptured. But Mexico's per capita GDP of $5,000 is only a fraction of America's—the largest income gap on earth between two adjoining countries. Half of all Mexicans live in poverty, and 18 million people exist on less than $2 a day, while the U.S. minimum wage is headed for $50 a day. Throw open the border, and millions could flood into the United States within months. Is America nothing more than an economic system?

Patrick J. Buchanan's new book is The Death of the West, *from which this excerpt is adapted.*

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Our old image is of Mexicans as amiable Catholics with traditional values. There are millions of hard-working, family-oriented Americans of Mexican heritage, who have been quick to answer the call to arms in several of America's wars. And, yes, history has shown that any man or woman, from any country on the planet, can be a good American.

But today's demographic sea change, especially in California, where a fourth of the residents are foreign-born and almost a third are Latino, has spawned a new ethnic chauvinism. When the U.S. soccer team played Mexico in Los Angeles a few years ago, the "Star-Spangled Banner" was jeered, an American flag was torn down, and the U.S. team and its few fans were showered with beer bottles and garbage.

In the New Mexico legislature in 2001, a resolution was introduced to rename the state "Nuevo Mexico," the name it carried before it became a part of the American Union. When the bill was defeated, sponsor Representative Miguel Garcia suggested to reporters that "covert racism" may have been the cause.

A spirit of separatism, nationalism, and irredentism has come alive in the barrio. Charles Truxillo, a professor of Chicano Studies at the University of New Mexico, says a new "Aztlan," with Los Angeles as its capital, is inevitable. José Angel Gutierrez, a political science professor at the University of Texas at Arlington and director of the UTA Mexican-American Study Center, told a university crowd: "We have an aging white America. They are not making babies. They are dying. The explosion is in our population. They are shitting in their pants in fear! I love it."

More authoritative voices are sounding the same notes. The Mexican consul general José Pescador Osuna remarked in 1998, "Even though I am saying this part serious, part joking, I think we are practicing La Reconquista in California." California legislator Art Torres called Proposition 187, to cut off welfare to illegal aliens, "the last gasp of white America."

"California is going to be a Mexican State. We are going to control all the institutions. If people don't like it, they should leave," exults Mario Obledo, president of the League of United Latin American Citizens, and recipient of the Medal of Freedom from President Clinton. Former Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo told Mexican-Americans in Dallas: "You are Mexicans, Mexicans who live north of the border."

> Like the Mississippi, with its endless flow of life-giving water, immigration has enriched America throughout history. But when the Mississippi floods its banks, the devastation can be vast.

Why should nationalistic and patriotic Mexicans not dream of a *reconquista*? The Latino student organization known by its Spanish acronym MEChA states, "We declare the independence of our *mestizo* nation. We are a bronze people with a bronze culture. Before the world, before all of North America...we are a nation." MEChA demands U.S. "restitution" for "past economic slavery, political exploitation, ethnic and cultural psychological destruction and denial of civil and human rights."

MEChA, which claims 4,000 campus chapters across the country, is unabashedly racist and anti-American. Its slogan—Por la Raza todo. Fuera de La Raza nada.—translates as "For our race, everything. For those outside our race, nothing." Yet it now exerts real power in many places. The former chair of its UCLA chapter, Antonio Villaraigosa, came within a whisker of being elected mayor of Los Angeles in 2001.

That Villaraigosa could go through an entire campaign for control of America's second-largest city without having to explain his association with a Chicano version of the white-supremacist Aryan Nation proves that America's major media are morally intimidated by any minority that boasts past victimhood credentials, real or imagined.

Meanwhile, the invasion rolls on. America's once-sleepy 2,000-mile border with Mexico is now the scene of daily confrontations. Even the Mexican army shows its contempt for U.S. law. The State Department reported 55 military incursions in the five years before an incident in 2000 when truckloads of Mexican soldiers barreled through a barbed-wire fence, fired shots, and pursued two mounted officers and a U.S. Border Patrol vehicle. U.S. Border Patrol agents believe that some Mexican army units collaborate with their country's drug cartels.

America has become a spillway for an exploding population that Mexico is unable to employ. Mexico's population is growing by 10 million every decade. Mexican senator Adolfo Zinser conceded that Mexico's "economic policy is dependent on unlimited emigration to the United States." The *Yanqui*-baiting academic and "onetime Communist supporter" Jorge Casteñada warned in *The Atlantic Monthly* six years ago that any American effort to cut back immigration "will make social peace in...Mexico untenable.... Some Americans dislike immigration, but there is very little they can do about it." With Señor Casteñada now President Fox's foreign minister and Senator Zinser his national security adviser, these opinions carry weight.

The Mexican government openly supports illegal entry of its citizens into the United States. An Office for Mexicans Abroad helps Mexicans evade U.S. border guards in the deserts of Arizona and California by providing them with "survival kits" of water, dry meat, Granola, Tylenol, anti-diarrhea pills, bandages, and condoms. The kits are distributed in Mexico's poorest towns, along with information on where illegal aliens can get free social services in California. Mexico is aiding and abetting

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an invasion of the United States, and the U.S. responds with intimidated silence and moral paralysis.

With California the preferred destination for this immigration flood, sociologist William Frey has documented an out-migration of African Americans and Anglo Americans from the Golden State in search of cities and towns like the ones in which they grew up. Other Californians are moving into gated communities. A country that cannot control its borders isn't really a country, Ronald Reagan warned some two decades ago.

Concerns about a radical change in America's ethnic composition have been called un-American. But they are as American as Benjamin Franklin, who once asked, "Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a Colony of Aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of our Anglifying them?" Franklin would never find out if his fears were justified, because German immigration was halted during the Revolutionary War.

Theodore Roosevelt likewise warned that "The one absolutely certain way of bringing this nation to ruin, of preventing all possibility of its continuing to be a nation at all, would be to permit it to become a tangle of squabbling nationalities."

Immigration is a subject worthy of national debate, yet it has been deemed taboo by the forces of political correctness. Like the Mississippi, with its endless flow of life-giving water, immigration has enriched America throughout history. But when the Mississippi floods its banks, the devastation can be enormous. What will become of our country if the levees do not hold?

Harvard economist George Borjas has found no net economic benefit from mass migration from the Third World. In his study, the added costs of schooling, health care, welfare, prisons, plus the added pressure on land, water, and power resources, exceeded the taxes that immigrants pay. The National Bureau of Economic Research put the cost of immigration at $80 billion in 1995. What are the benefits, then, that justify the risk of the balkanization of America?

Today there are 28.4 million foreign-born persons living in the United States. Half are from Latin America and the Caribbean, one fourth from Asia. The rest are from Africa, the Middle East, and Europe. One in every five New Yorkers and Floridians is foreign-born, as is one of every four Californians. As the United States allots most of its immigrant visas to relatives of new arrivals, it is difficult for Europeans to be admitted to the U.S., while entire villages from El Salvador have settled here easily.

• A third of the legal immigrants who come to the United States have not finished high school. Some 22 percent do not even have a ninth-grade education, compared to less than 5 percent of our native-born.

• Of the immigrants who have arrived since 1980, 60 percent still do not earn $20,000 a year.

• Immigrant use of food stamps, Supplemental Security Income, and school lunch programs runs from 50 percent to 100 percent higher than use by the native born.

• By 1991, foreign nationals accounted for 24 percent of all arrests in Los Angeles and 36 percent of all arrests in Miami.

• In 1980, federal and state prisons housed 9,000 criminal aliens. By 1995, this number had soared to 59,000, a figure that does not include aliens who became citizens, or the criminals sent over from Cuba by Fidel Castro in the Mariel boat lift.

Mass emigration from poor Third World countries is good for business, especially businesses that employ large numbers of workers at low wages. But what is good for corporate America is not necessarily good for Middle America. When it comes to open borders, the corporate interest and the national interest do not coincide; they collide. Mass immigration raises more critical issues than jobs or wages—immigration is ultimately about America herself. Is the U.S. government, by deporting scarcely 1 percent of illegal aliens a year, failing in its Constitutional duty to protect the rights of American citizens?

Most of the people who leave their homelands to come to America, whether from Mexico or Mauritania, are good, decent people. They seek the same freedom and opportunities our ancestors sought.

But today's record number of immigrants arriving from cultures that have little in common with our own raises a question: What is a nation? Some define a nation as one people of common ancestry, language, literature, history, heritage, heroes, traditions, customs, mores, and faith who have lived together over time in the same land under the same rulers. Among those who pressed this definition were Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, who laid down these conditions on immigrants: "They must cast off the European skin, never to resume it. They must look forward to their posterity rather than backward to their ancestors." Woodrow Wilson, speaking to newly naturalized Americans in 1915 in Philadelphia, declared: "A man who thinks of himself as belonging to a particular national group in America has yet to become an American."

But Americans no longer agree on values, history, or heroes. What one half of America sees as a glorious past, the other views as shameful and wicked. Columbus, Washington, Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, and Lee—all of them heroes of the old America—are under attack. Equality and freedom, those most American of words, today hold different meanings for different Americans.

Nor is a shared belief in democracy sufficient to hold a people together. Half the nation did not even bother to vote in the Presidential election of 2000. Millions cannot name their congressman, senator, or the justices of the Supreme Court. They do not care. We live in the same country, we are governed by the same leaders. But are we one nation and one people?

It is hard to believe that over one million immigrants every year, from every country on earth, a third of them entering illegally, will reforge the bonds of our disuniting nation. John Stuart Mill cautioned that unified public opinion is "necessary to the working of representative government." We are about to find out if he was right.

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Ben Wattenberg: Immigration is good.

Many leading thinkers tell us we are now in a culture clash that will determine the course of history, that today's war is for Western civilization itself. There is a demographic dimension to this "clash of civilizations." While certain of today's demographic signals bode well for America, some look very bad. If we are to assess America's future prospects, we must start by asking, "Who are we?" "Who will we be?" and "How will we relate to the rest of the world?" The answers all involve immigration.

As data from the 2000 census trickled out, one item hit the headline jackpot. By the year 2050, we were told, America would be "majority non-white." The census count showed more Hispanics in America than had been expected, making them "America's largest minority." When blacks, Asians, and Native Americans are added to the Hispanic total, the "non-white" population emerges as a large minority, on the way to becoming a small majority around the middle of this century.

The first thing worth noting is that these rigid racial definitions are absurd. The whole concept of race as a biological category is becoming ever-more dubious in America. Consider:

Under the Clinton administration's census rules, any American who checks both the black and white boxes on the form inquiring about "race" is counted as black, even if his heritage is, say, one eighth black and seven eighths white. In effect, this enshrines the infamous segregationist view that one drop of black blood makes a person black.

Although most Americans of Hispanic heritage declare themselves "white," they are often inferentially counted as non-white, as in the erroneous *New York Times* headline which recently declared: "Census Confirms Whites Now a Minority" in California.

If those of Hispanic descent, hailing originally from about 40 nations, are counted as a minority, why aren't those of Eastern European descent, coming from about 10 nations, also counted as a minority? (In which case the Eastern European "minority" would be larger than the Hispanic minority.)

But within this jumble of numbers there lies a central truth: America is becoming a *universal nation*, with significant representation of nearly all human hues, creeds, ethnicities, and national ancestries. Continued moderate immigration will make us an even more universal nation as time goes on. And this process may well play a serious role in determining the outcome of the contest of civilizations taking place across the globe.

And current immigration rates *are* moderate, even though America admitted more legal immigrants from 1991 to 2000 than in any previous decade—between 10 and 11 million. The highest previous decade was 1901-1910, when 8.8 million people arrived. In addition, each decade now, several million illegal immigrants enter the U.S., thanks partly to ease of transportation.

Critics like Pat Buchanan say that absorbing all those immigrants will "swamp" the American culture and bring Third World chaos inside our borders. I disagree. Keep in mind: Those

8.8 million immigrants who arrived in the U.S. between 1901 and 1910 increased the total American population by 1 percent per year. (Our numbers grew from 76 million to 92 million during that decade.) In our most recent decade, on the other hand, the 10 million legal immigrants represented annual growth of only 0.36 percent (as the U.S. went from 249 million to 281 million).

Overall, nearly 15 percent of Americans were foreign-born in 1910. In 1999, our foreign-born were about 10 percent of our total. (In 1970, the foreign-born portion of our population was down to about 5 percent. Most of the rebound resulted from a more liberal immigration law enacted in 1965.) Or look at the "foreign stock" data. These figures combine Americans born in foreign lands *and* their offspring, even if those children have only one foreign-born parent. Today, America's "foreign stock" amounts to 21 percent of the population and heading up. But in 1910, the comparable figure was 34 percent—one third of the entire country—and the heavens did not collapse.

We can take in more immigrants, if we want to. Should we?

Return to the idea that immigrants could swamp American culture. If that is true, we clearly should not increase our intake. But what if, instead of swamping us, immigration helps us become a stronger nation and a *swamper of others* in the global competition of civilizations?

Immigration is now what keeps America growing. According to the U.N., the typical American woman today bears an average of 1.93 children over the course of her childbearing years. That is mildly below the 2.1 "replacement" rate required to keep a population stable over time, absent immigration. The "medium variant" of the most recent Census Bureau projections posits that the U.S. population will grow from 281 million in 2000 to 397 million in 2050 with expected immigration, but only to 328 million should we choose a path of zero immigration. That is a difference of a population growth of 47 million versus 116 million. (The 47 million rise is due mostly to demographic momentum from previous higher birthrates.) If we have zero immigration with today's low birthrates indefinitely, the American population would eventually begin to *shrink*, albeit slowly.

Is more population good for America? When it comes to potential global power and influence, numbers can matter a great deal. Taxpayers, many of them, pay for a fleet of aircraft carriers. And on the economic side it is better to have a customer boom than a customer bust. (It may well be that Japan's stagnant demography is one cause of its decade-long slump.) The environmental case could be debated all day long, but remember that an immigrant does not add to the global population—he merely moves from one spot on the planet to another.

But will the current crop of immigrants acculturate? Immi-

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grants to America always have. Some critics, like Mr. Buchanan, claim that this time, it's different. Mexicans seem to draw his particular ire, probably because they are currently our largest single source of immigration.

Yet only about a fifth (22 percent) of legal immigrants to America currently come from Mexico. Adding illegal immigrants might boost the figure to 30 percent, but the proportion of Mexican immigrants will almost surely shrink over time. Mexican fertility has diminished from 6.5 children per woman 30 years ago to 2.5 children now, and continues to fall. If high immigration continues under such circumstances, Mexico will run out of Mexicans.

California hosts a wide variety of immigrant groups in addition to Mexicans. And the children and grandchildren of Koreans, Chinese, Khmer, Russian Jews, Iranians, and Thai (to name a few) will speak English, not Spanish. Even among Mexican-Americans, many second- and third-generation offspring speak no Spanish at all, often to the dismay of their elders (a familiar American story).

Michael Barone's book *The New Americans* theorizes that Mexican immigrants are following roughly the same course of earlier Italian and Irish immigrants. Noel Ignatiev's book *How the Irish Became White* notes that it took a hundred years until Irish-Americans (who were routinely characterized as drunken "gorillas") reached full income parity with the rest of America.

California recently repealed its bilingual education programs. Nearly half of Latino voters supported the proposition, even though it was demonized by opponents as being anti-Hispanic. Latina mothers reportedly tell their children, with no intent to disparage the Spanish language, that "Spanish is the language of busboys"—stressing that in America you have to speak English to get ahead.

In the clash of civilizations, America is helped by the fact that it is becoming a universal nation, with significant representation of nearly all human hues and creeds.

The huge immigration wave at the dawn of the twentieth century undeniably brought tumult to America. Many early social scientists promoted theories of what is now called "scientific racism," which "proved" that persons from Northwest Europe were biologically superior. The new immigrants—Jews, Poles, and Italians—were considered racially apart and far down the totem pole of human character and intelligence. Blacks and Asians were hardly worth measuring. The immigration wave sparked a resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan, peaking in the early 1920s. At that time, the biggest KKK state was not in the South; it was Indiana, where Catholics, Jews, and immigrants, as well as blacks, were targets.

Francis Walker, superintendent of the U.S. Bureau of the Census in the late 1890s, and later president of MIT, wrote in 1896 that "The entrance of such vast masses of peasantry degraded below our utmost conceptions is a matter which no intelligent patriot can look upon without the gravest apprehension and alarm. They are beaten men from beaten races. They have none of the ideas and aptitudes such as belong to those who were descended from the tribes that met under the oak trees of old Germany to make laws and choose chiefs." (Sorry, Francis, but Germany did not have a good twentieth century.)

Fast-forward to the present. By high margins, Americans now tell pollsters it was a very good thing that Poles, Italians, and Jews emigrated to America. Once again, it's the *newcomers* who are viewed with suspicion. This time, it's the Mexicans, Filipinos, and people from the Caribbean who make Americans nervous. But such views change over time. The newer immigrant groups are typically more popular now than they were even a decade ago.

Look at the high rates of intermarriage. Most Americans have long since lost their qualms about marriage between people of different European ethnicities. That is spreading across new boundaries. In 1990, 64 percent of Asian Americans married outside their heritage, as did 37 percent of Hispanics. Black-white intermarriage is much lower, but it climbed from 3 percent in 1980 to 9 percent in 1998. (One reason to do away with the race question on the census is that within a few decades we won't be able to know who's what.)

Can the West, led by America, prevail in a world full of sometimes unfriendly neighbors? Substantial numbers of people are necessary (though not sufficient) for a country, or a civilization, to be globally influential. Will America and its Western allies have enough people to keep their ideas and principles alive?

On the surface, it doesn't look good. In 1986, I wrote a book called *The Birth Dearth*. My thesis was that birth rates in developed parts of the world—Europe, North America, Australia, and Japan, nations where liberal Western values are rooted—had sunk so low that there was danger ahead. At that time, women in those modern countries were bearing a lifetime average of 1.83 children, the lowest rate ever absent war, famine, economic depression, or epidemic illness. It was, in fact, 15 percent below the long-term population replacement level.

Those trendlines have now plummeted even further. Today, the fertility rate in the modern countries averages 1.5 children per woman, 28 percent below the replacement level. The European rate, astonishingly, is 1.34 children per woman—radically below replacement level. The Japanese rate is similar. The United

Ben Wattenberg, an AEI senior fellow, is author of The First Universal Nation, The Birth Dearth, *and the upcoming* Survival 101.

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States is the exceptional country in the current demographic scene.

As a whole, the nations of the Western world will soon be less populous, and a substantially smaller fraction of the world population. Demographer Samuel Preston estimates that even if European fertility rates jump back to replacement level immediately (which won't happen) the continent would still lose 100 million people by 2060. Should the rate not level off fairly soon, the ramifications are incalculable, or, as the Italian demographer Antonio Golini likes to mutter at demographic meetings, "unsustainable...unsustainable." (Shockingly, the current Italian fertility rate is 1.2 children per woman, and it has been at or below 1.5 for 20 years—a full generation.)

The modern countries of the world, the bearers of Western civilization, made up one third of the global population in 1950, and one fifth in 2000, and are projected to represent one eighth by 2050. If we end up in a world with nine competing civilizations, as Samuel Huntington maintains, this will make it that much harder for Western values to prevail in the cultural and political arenas.

The good news is that fertility rates have also plunged in the less developed countries—from 6 children in 1970 to 2.9 today. By the middle to end of this century, there should be a rough global convergence of fertility rates and population growth.

What if, instead of swamping us, immigration helps us become a stronger nation and a *swamper* in global competition?

Since September 11, immigration has gotten bad press in America. The terrorist villains, indeed, were foreigners. Not only in the U.S. but in many other nations as well, governments are suddenly cracking down on illegal entry. This is understandable for the moment. But an enduring turn away from legal immigration would be foolhardy for America and its allies.

If America doesn't continue to take in immigrants, it won't continue to grow in the long run. If the Europeans and Japanese don't start to accept more immigrants they will evaporate. Who will empty the bedpans in Italy's retirement homes? The only major pool of immigrants available to Western countries hails from the less developed world, i.e. non-white, and non-Western countries.

The West as a whole is in a deep demographic ditch. Accordingly, Western countries should try to make it easier for couples who want to have children. In America, the advent of tax credits for children (which went from zero to $1,000 per child per year over the last decade) is a small step in the direction of fertility reflation. Some European nations are enacting similar pro-natal policies. Bur their fertility rates are so low, and their economies so constrained, that any such actions can only be of limited help.

That leaves immigration. I suggest America should make immigration safer (by more carefully investigating new entrants), but not cut it back. It may even be wise to make a small increase in our current immigration rate. America needs to keep growing, and we can fruitfully use both high- and low-skill immigrants. Pluralism works here, as it does in Canada and Australia.

Can pluralism work in Europe? I don't know, and neither do the Europeans. They hate the idea, but they will depopulate if they don't embrace pluralism, via immigration. Perhaps our example can help Europeans see that pluralism might work in the admittedly more complex European context. Japan is probably a hopeless case; perhaps the Japanese should just change the name of their country to Dwindle.

Our non-pluralist Western allies will likely diminish in population, relative power, and influence during this century. They will become much grayer. Nevertheless, by 2050 there will still be 750 million of them left, so the U.S. needs to keep the Western alliance strong. For all our bickering, let us not forget that the European story in the second half of the twentieth century was a wonderful one; Western Europeans stopped killing each other. Now they are joining hands politically. The next big prize may be Russia. If the Russians choose our path, we will see what Tocqueville saw: that America and Russia are natural allies.

We must enlist other allies as well. America and India, for instance, are logical partners—pluralist, large, English-speaking, and democratic. We must tell our story. And our immigrants, who come to our land by choice, are our best salesmen. We should extend our radio services to the Islamic world, as we have to the unliberated nations of Asia through Radio Free Asia. The people at the microphones will be U.S. immigrants.

We can lose the contest of civilizations if the developing countries don't evolve toward Western values. One of the best forms of "public diplomacy" is immigration. New immigrants send money home, bypassing corrupt governments—the best kind of foreign aid there is. They go back home to visit and tell their families and friends in the motherland that American modernism, while not perfect, ain't half-bad. Some return home permanently, but they bring with them Western expectations of open government, economic efficiency, and personal liberty. They know that Westernism need not be restricted to the West, and they often have an influence on local politics when they return to their home countries.

Still, because of Europe and Japan, the demographic slide of Western civilization will continue. And so, America must be prepared to go it alone. If we keep admitting immigrants at our current levels there will be almost 400 million Americans by 2050. That can keep us strong enough to defend and perhaps extend our views and values. And the civilization we will be advancing may not just be Western, but even more universal: American.

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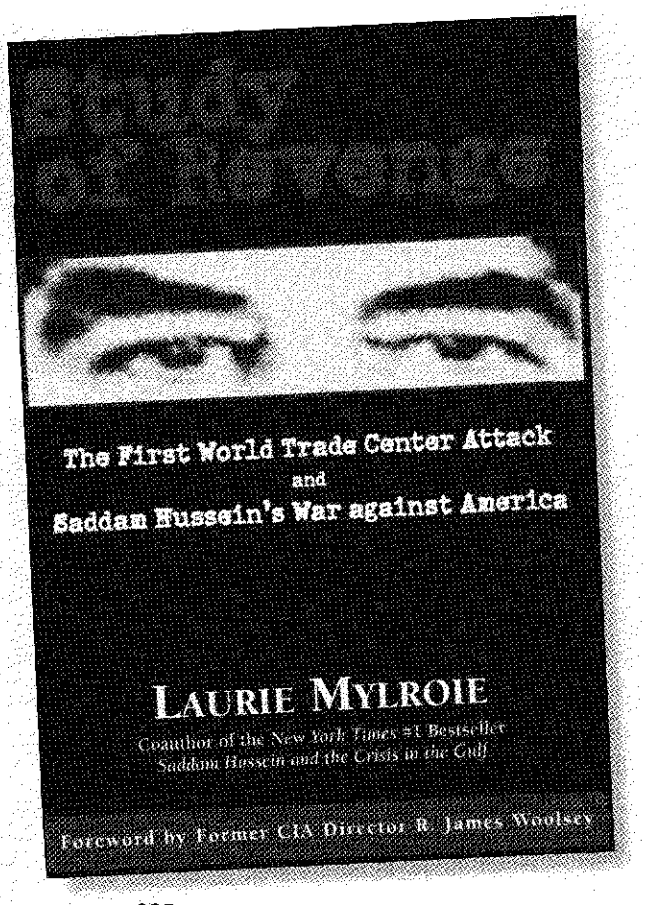
The terrorists war against the U.S. started before September 11 . . .



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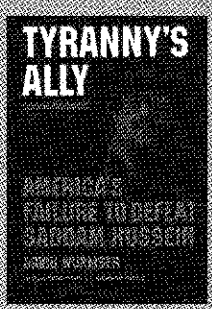

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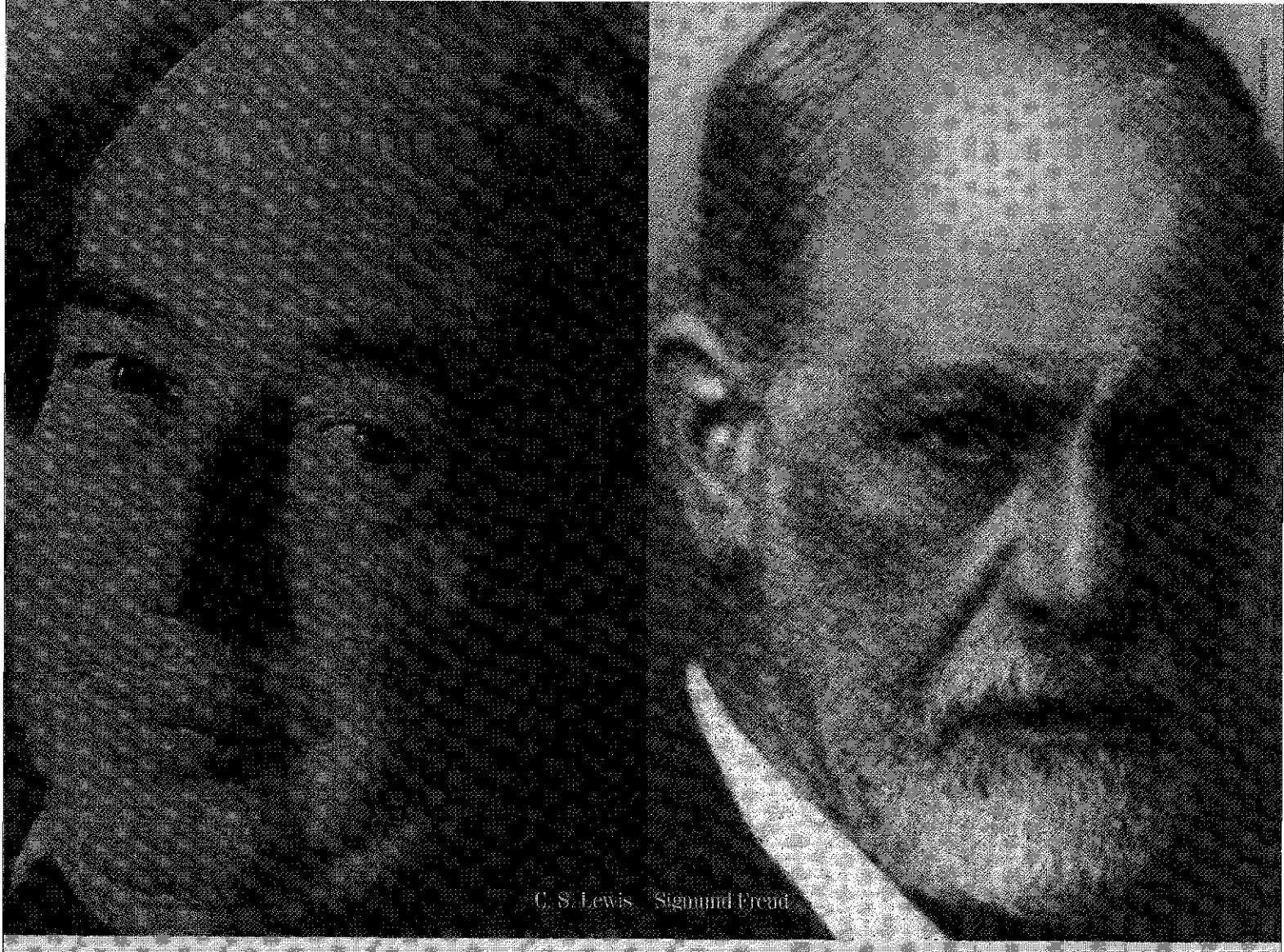

C. S. Lewis Sigmund Freud

C. S. Lewis vs. Sigmund Freud on Good and Evil

By Armand M. Nicholi, Jr.

Moral relativism (the prevailing doctrine in our culture today) argues that humans have no moral point of reference, that nothing I think can be more wrong or right than what you think. Such a worldview prompts an important question: Is there a universal moral law, a set of rights and wrongs that is permanent and absolute and has existed in nearly every culture?

For many years I have contemplated that question by comparing the contrasting views of two of the last century's most influential thinkers: C. S. Lewis and Sigmund Freud. Their writings run in striking parallels, yet lead us to completely different conclusions. Lewis serves as one of today's primary spokesmen for absolute truth and religious faith. With Marx discredited, Freud remains the spokesman for moral relativism and materialism.

We all possess an awareness of right and wrong, or what we "ought" to do. Are these feelings an indication of a God-given moral law? Or do they simply reflect what our parents taught us? Freud believes that we simply make up our own moral codes, just as we make up traffic laws, and that these codes can change randomly from culture to culture. Lewis maintains that we discover moral truth, good and evil, just as we discover the laws of mathematics, and that the universal

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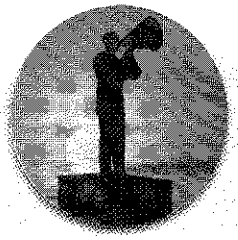
moral law transcends time and culture.

"There are no sources of knowledge," Freud wrote, "other than carefully scrutinized observations—what we call research." He declares that there is "no knowledge derived from revelation." The Ten Commandments of the Old Testament and the two Great Commandments of the New (to love God, and to love one's neighbor as oneself) come, according to Freud, from human experience, not from God. The scientific method, he insists, is our only source of knowledge.

Lewis couldn't disagree more: The scientific method simply cannot answer all questions, cannot possibly be the source of all knowledge. The job of science—a very important and necessary job—is to experiment and observe and report how things behave or react. "But why anything comes to be there at all, and whether there is anything behind the things science observes…this is not a scientific question."

Lewis argues that the question of whether or not an Intelligence exists beyond the universe can never be answered by the scientific method. Attempts to answer that question are based on philosophical or metaphysical assumptions, not scientific principles. Similarly, we cannot expect science to answer questions concerning the existence of a moral law.



Lewis maintains that we discover good and evil just as we discover the laws of mathematics.

Lewis continues: "We want to know whether the universe simply happens to be what it is for no reason or whether there is a power behind it that makes it what it is." He thinks that one way we could expect this power to show itself would be "inside ourselves as an influence or a command trying to get us to behave in a certain way. And that is just what we do find inside ourselves…something which is directing the universe and which appears in me as a law urging me to do right and making me feel responsible and uncomfortable when I do wrong."

Lewis cites two sources of evidence for the existence of a Creator: "One is the universe He has made…the other is that Moral Law which He has put into our minds." The moral law is better evidence because "it is inside information…you find out more about God from the Moral Law than from the universe in general just as you find out more about a man by listening to his conversation than by looking at a house he has built." Lewis is joined in this opinion by none other than Immanuel Kant, who also pointed to the "moral law within" as a powerful witness to the existence of God.

Armand M. Nicholi, Jr., M.D., professor of psychiatry, has taught a course on Freud and Lewis at Harvard College for over 20 years. This is adapted from his new book The Question of God, *forthcoming in April.*

Freud disagrees with both men. He thinks it "strange" that Kant would use the moral law within men as evidence for God's existence. From his observations of severely depressed patients, Freud concluded that feelings of conscience and guilt come and go. "It is a most remarkable experience to see morality, which is supposed to have been given us by God and thus deeply implanted in us, functioning as a periodic phenomenon," he scoffs.

Freud did not sneer entirely at internal moralities. He allowed that conscience often plays an important role in mental illness. "If a patient of ours is suffering from a sense of guilt…we do not recommend him to disregard his qualms of conscience and do not emphasize his undoubted innocence; he himself has often tried to do so without success. What we do is to remind him that such a strong and persistent feeling must after all be based on something real, which it may perhaps be possible to discover" (and, presumably, explain away).

Children's sense of right and wrong comes merely from what they have been taught by their parents, believes Freud. "Their parents' prohibitions and demands persist within them as a moral conscience," he writes. Eventually, they introduce this whole system of rewards and punishments "unaltered into their religion." God and His Commandments are thus simply a projection of parental authority.

Lewis concedes that we learn the moral law, in part, from our parents and teachers, and that this helps develop our conscience. But that does not mean that the moral law is "a human invention." Lewis explains that parents and teachers did not make up the moral law any more than they made up the multiplication tables they also teach us. He points out that some of what children learn from their elders "are mere conventions which might have been different—we learn to keep to the left of the road, but it might just have been the rule to keep to the right—and others of them, like mathematics, are real truths." Mores and customs change with time; the moral law holds firm.

In his letters, Freud endorsed "the excellent maxim of Theodore Visher: 'What is moral is self-evident.' " He insisted that "We 'just see' that there is no reason why my neighbour's happiness should be sacrificed to my own…. Their intrinsic reasonableness shines by its own light. It is because all morality is based on such self-evident principles that we say to a man, when we would recall him to right conduct, 'be reasonable.' " Freud's internal compass is of course "rationally perceived," not placed there by a Creator. Yet this statement belies his argument against the existence of inherent moral codes.

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Lewis's empirical evidence suggests that certain truths are written in the hearts of men. Moral law, he points out, is essentially the same in all cultures. The differences that exist "are not really that great." "Human beings all over the earth have this curious idea that they ought to behave in a certain way." They ought not steal another man's money, or make love to another man's wife. Lewis compared the moral teachings of the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, Hindus, Chinese, Greeks, and Romans and found "how very like they are to each other and to our own." For instance, "Men have differed as regards what people you ought to be unselfish to—whether it was only your own family, or your fellow countrymen, or everyone. But they have always agreed that you ought not to put yourself first. Selfishness has never been admired."

This moral law has been referred to as the Tao, or Natural Law, or traditional morality. Lewis says that throughout history people took for granted that everyone knew the moral law by nature. He reminds us that during the last world war we took for granted that the Nazis knew what they did was wrong. They knew the moral law and they knew they broke it. We tried them and found them guilty. "What was the sense in saying the enemy were in the wrong," Lewis asks, "unless Right is a real thing which the Nazis at bottom knew as well as we did and ought to have practiced?"

Lewis notes that although basic moral law does not change over time or from culture to culture, the sensitivity to the law, and how a culture or an individual expresses the law, may vary. Under the Nazi regime the German nation obviously ignored the law and practiced a morality the rest of the world considered abominable.

Bad ideas, Lewis warned, contribute to moral decay. Indeed, he believed that "the effect of Psychoanalysis on the public mind" could be blamed partly for modern culture's loss of sensitivity to real wrongdoing. Freud's "doctrines of repressions and inhibitions" imply that "the sense of Shame is a dangerous and mischievous thing," Lewis writes. "We are told to 'get things out in the open'...on the ground that these 'things' are very natural and we need not be ashamed." Thus we tend to accept uncivil behavior—"cowardice, lying, envy, unchastity"—more readily than many earlier cultures.

Freud believed that education and establishing the "dictatorship of reason" would be the only solution to the cruel and immoral behavior that characterizes human history. "Our best hope for the future," he proclaims, "is that intellect—the scientific spirit, reason—may in process of time establish a dictatorship in the mental life of man." In a letter to Albert Einstein, who had written to Freud asking what could be done to protect mankind from war, Freud responds: "The ideal condition of things would of course be a community of men who had subordinated their instinctual life to the dictatorship of reason."

Moral Relativism's Sour Fruit

From an address delivered recently by British physician Theodore Dalrymple at the American Enterprise Institute

Bad or foolish ideas propagated by today's liberal intelligentsia have serious consequences. In my native Britain, for instance, there is a powerful tendency for wishful thinking to not only replace thought but to be considered virtue in itself. Recently, for instance, I read in one of our leading intellectual journals a review discussing the analytic philosopher A. J. Ayer. The author listed Ayer's virtues and vices, and among his virtues was counted the fact that he was unconventional. Unconventionality in itself was considered a virtue, irrespective of what it was that Ayer was unconventional about.

Now, it doesn't require much knowledge of the world to know that unconventionality is not in itself a virtue. It can be a virtue, of course, if it leads to moral or technical advance or to great artistic achievement. But to give a very obvious counter-example: The British serial killer Dennis Nilsen was deeply unconventional. He would entice young homosexuals to his flat, where he would strangle them, and then he would sit and watch television with their corpses on the sofa for a couple of days, until putrefaction set in. And he would then cut up their bodies and boil them in saucepans, and flush the results down the sink. He was eventually caught only because the pipes of the house in which he lived blocked up.

Even amidst today's moral relativism, I doubt that anyone would enter the fact that Dennis Nilsen was unconventional amongst his virtues. This is so obvious that one wonders how it can be that people who have gone through 20 years of education can omit to think of such a thing. Perhaps it takes 20 years of education to be able to omit such a thing.

I'll give you another example of today's poisonous intellectual insincerity. I recently read a piece in the *Times Literary Supplement* in which the author praised the British novelist Kingsley Amis for discovering the liberating power of unadulterated rudeness. Again, it takes very minimal reflection to realize what pernicious nonsense that is. Of course, we all give way to rudeness sometimes, and sometimes we experience a momentary gratification when we do so. But unless we're psychopaths, we realize that is not liberating in the slightest—not to us, and certainly not to the person on the receiving end of our rudeness.

I am a psychiatrist, and when I read those words in the *Times Literary Supplement* I couldn't help but think of my elderly working-class patients, people who'd lived through the Depression, the war, whose cities were bombed, whose

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Yet Freud observed the rise of the Nazis within Germany, one of the most modern and educated nations in the world, and he knew about the terror of the SS troops, one of the most educated fighting forces in history. He also noticed that the increased knowledge of psychoanalysts generally did not make them more moral than other professional groups. "That psychoanalysis has not made the analysts themselves better, nobler, or of stronger character remains a disappointment for me," Freud confessed. "Perhaps I was wrong to expect it."

> Freud believes we simply make up our own moral codes, just as we make up traffic laws.

C. S. Lewis acknowledges that, because of background and training, certain individuals have a more developed understanding of the moral law than others. He recalls that "when I came first to the university I was as nearly without a moral conscience as a boy could be. Some faint distaste for cruelty and for meanness about money was my utmost reach—of chastity, truthfulness, and self-sacrifice I thought as a baboon thinks of classical music." He noticed in some of his classmates a greater awareness of the moral law and a greater desire to follow it, and he gradually discovered these same things in himself.

Freud likewise acknowledges that people differ in the development of their conscience. But he concludes that if God did provide the moral law within us, He "has done an uneven and careless piece of work, for a large majority of men have brought along with them only a modest amount of it or scarcely enough to be worth mentioning." In a letter to his friend Pfister, Freud wrote that "ethics are remote from me…I do not break my head very much about good and evil." He said that he did not consider most people worth much "no matter whether they publicly subscribe to this or that ethical doctrine or none at all." Freud did not include himself in the "large majority" of thinly moraled men, however. In a letter to Bostonian Dr. James Jackson Putnam, he wrote "I consider myself to be a very moral person." Freud compared his own conduct not with a universal law, but against the moral conduct of others, and he liked the comparison. "In a sense of justice and consideration for others, in disliking making others suffer or taking advantage of them, I can measure myself with the best people I have known. I have never done anything mean or

country lost half a million men in the defense of elementary decency, and who now live in a society in which it is perfectly normal for them to be pushed aside physically in queues at bus stops by young people muttering, "Get out of the way, you f'ing old bag."

Could there be any more bitter and less liberating end to a life filled with hardship, sacrifice, and often a great deal of bravery than to be the subject of such brutal rudeness and to be so completely defenseless in its face? Yet here we have a venerable organ of Britain's intellectual elite propagating the idea that unmannerliness is in some way noble and freeing.

This quality of insincerity, of untruthfulness both to what we know and to what we feel, has long pervaded the intellectual life of our elites. It has obscured the most obvious moral truths. Intellectuals spouting such moral relativism exude plenty of sympathy, often in the name of multiculturalism, but none of it is real.

Wishful thinking and willful blindness to irreconcilable conflicts between different moral conceptions of life have taken the place of genuine thought, and paralyzed the will to make important distinctions. In my particular work, I see a lot of Muslim Pakistani girls who at the age of 16 or 17 are taken to Pakistan and forcibly married to someone they've never met. They've been betrothed since birth. There are cases of girls who have been killed for resisting. But what I find surprising is that there is hardly any reference to this by any of our multiculturalists, and none by our feminists, though this is genuine and relentless oppression.

This is the fruit of the post-modernist habit of using words not to convey meaning and truth but rather to earn admiration and to have a penumbra of trendy virtue. And it has helped blind our society to the possibility that there are people in the world whose enmity towards us is earnest. Because some of us don't really mean anything we say, we assume that other people don't really mean what they say either. In modern literary criticism, the words "playful" and "ludic"—meaning something halfway between meaningless and frivolous—are used as a term of praise.

My hope is that the events of September 11th will exert a salutary effect upon our intellectual life in this area. Specifically, I hope that we will hear no more of all ways of life and all cultures being equally valid, which none of us truly believes but which many people mouth in order to appear broad-minded and generous of spirit. That sort of moral relativism gives comfort to our enemies by convincing them that we are, in fact, defenseless. It saps our will to do anything. And it gives us no moral basis upon which to defend ourselves.

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malicious and cannot trace any temptation to do so," Freud writes. He insisted he obtained no satisfaction "in concluding I am better than most other people."

Freud points out that although he supported freer sexuality, he himself did not exercise that freedom; he adhered to the traditional biblical sexual code. When he acted differently from the way he argued—for instance by being monogamous while endorsing untraditional sex lives for others—Freud apparently saw no contradiction between what he professed and what he practiced.

When Freud says "I consider myself to be a very moral person...I can measure myself with the best people I have known...I am better than most other people," he falls into a category that Lewis describes in his book *The Screwtape Letters*. In an address to young devils in training, the very experienced demon Screwtape says it is easier to lead a person to hell if he will compare himself to others. A person who knows he is superior in a certain aspect never needs to point that out to others. He simply accepts it. The claim of one's own goodness is made only by those who feel "the itching, smarting, writhing awareness of an inferiority which the patient refuses to accept."

> Freud concludes that if God did provide the moral law within us, He "has done an uneven and careless piece of work."

"The ethical demands on which religion seeks to lay stress," Freud wrote, "need to be given another basis; for they are indispensable to human society and it is dangerous to link obedience to them with religious faith." Why dangerous? Because Freud believed that as people became more knowledgeable they would eventually turn away from religious faith. And if the masses no longer believe in God, what will motivate them to live moral lives? "If the sole reason why you must not kill your neighbor is because God has forbidden it and will severely punish you for it in this or the next life—then, when you learn that there is no God and that you need not fear His punishment, you will certainly kill your neighbor without hesitation, and you can only be prevented from doing so by mundane force."

Freud proposed an argument for enlightened self-interest as a basis for social order. "Civilization has little to fear from educated people," he asserted—because reason tells them it is in their best interest to be ethical. (He wrote this in 1927, not long before the Nazi rise in educated Germany.) He warned that "it is another matter with the great mass of uneducated." Rank and file citizens need to be given basic moral marching orders. Freud believed that if the masses were told not to kill "in the interest of their communal existence," they would not. This, however, appears to contradict his strong conviction that passion governs the masses more than reason.

In any case, "it would be an undoubted advantage if we were to leave God out altogether and honestly admit the purely human origin of the regulations and precepts of civilization," Freud asserted. "Along with their pretended sanctity, these commandments and laws would lose their rigidity and unchangeableness as well." As people became more educated, they would understand that these rules were made "to serve their interests...and they would adopt a more friendly attitude toward them."

C. S. Lewis, however, believed that ignoring the moral law makes it hard for people to see beyond their own selfish interests. After he rejected atheism, Lewis wrote in a letter to a friend, "Who will take medicine unless he knows he is in the grip of disease? Moral relativity is the enemy we have to overcome."

Without a law and Lawmaker to whom we are accountable, there is little awareness of how short we fall, and little need for forgiveness and redemption. We end up merely comparing ourselves with others, especially those who fail more than we do. This leads to low moral standards, and spiritual conceit.

If, instead of comparing himself to others, Freud had measured himself against the great commandments of the Old and New Testaments, he might not have been so complacent. He openly spoke of "loving one's neighbors as oneself" as foolish and "impossible."

Lewis argued that "when a man is getting better he understands more and more clearly the evil that is still left in him. When a man is getting worse, he understands his own badness less and less. A moderately bad man knows he is not very good: a thoroughly bad man thinks he is all right." The more we struggle with our bad impulses, Lewis writes, the better we know them. "Even attempted virtue brings light; indulgence brings fog."

When Freud examined his own behavior he acknowledged some force within him that motivated him to act morally—"an impulsion to do good." But he could not fathom the source of his concept of right and wrong. As his official biographer and colleague Ernest Jones wrote, "Freud himself was constantly puzzled [that] a moral attitude was so deeply implanted as to seem part of his original nature."

In a letter to Dr. Putnam, Freud admitted: "When I ask myself why I have always behaved honorably, ready to spare others and to be kind wherever possible, and why I did not give up doing so when I observed that in that way one harms oneself and becomes an anvil, because other people are brutal and untrustworthy, then, it is true, I have no answer. Sensible it certainly was not." We can be glad Freud could not bring himself to be rude, uncaring, or unfaithful. And perhaps his recognition of an "impulsion" within himself to be moral may be a clear indication that, at some level, Freud agreed with Lewis, and with St. Paul, who insisted that "the law is written on their hearts."

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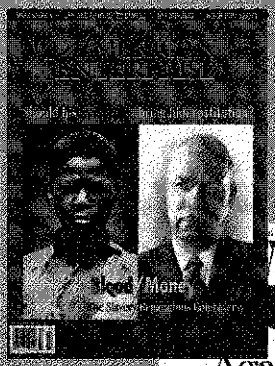

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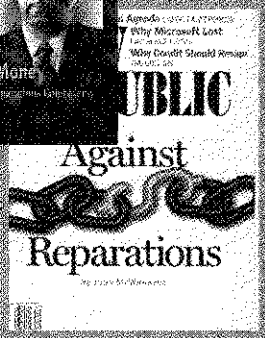

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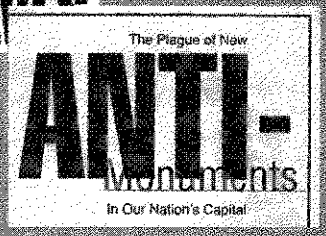

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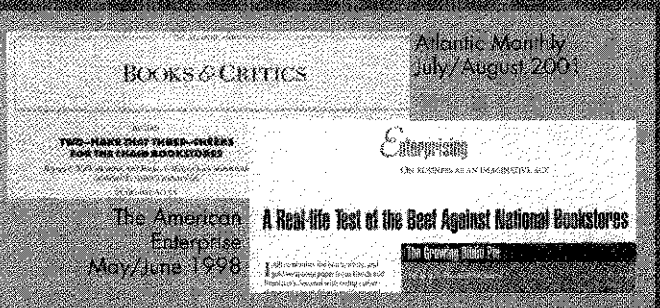

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Socialism vs. Religion

For many socialists, Marx is a prophet and communism is the gospel. Literally.

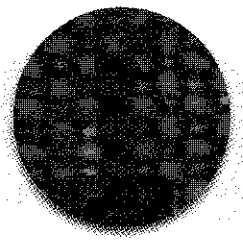
By Joshua Muravchik

The two central mysteries of socialism are these: How did an idea which, whenever put into practice, showed itself to be incongruent with human nature spread faster and further than any other political philosophy? And how did an idea that called on so many humane sentiments lend its name to the cruelest regimes in human history? The key to these riddles lies in socialism's role as a redemptive creed, a substitute religion—with a twist.

One of its most important founders was Moses Hess, the "father of German socialism" who played the major part in winning Marx and Engels to communism. After fleeing the cudgels of a benighted rabbinic teacher who tried to beat the Talmud into him, Hess had turned away from religion and immersed himself in the ideas of the Enlightenment. But his spirit was uneasy. He confided in his diary: "I worked without rest to rediscover my God, whom I had lost.... Nor could I remain a skeptic for the rest of my life. I had to have a God—and I did find him, after a long search, after a terrible fight—in my own heart."

The God he found was communism. In a catechism composed in 1846, he contrasted his new faith with the one that prevailed in the society around him. Christians invest their hopes "in the image of...heavenly joy.... We, on the other hand, want this heaven on earth."

Hess was renowned for his "purity of character" and "saintly" ways. But the circle he joined in pursuit of his God consisted of men of a different sort, foremost among them, Karl Marx. Although he was Marx's senior by several years, and led him in the embrace of communism, Hess soon deferred to the younger man's superior polemical gifts, calling Marx his "idol" who "will give the final blow to all medieval religion and politics." Marx, however, was full of scorn for Hess's persistence in trying to ground socialism on an ethical basis rather than on historical inevitability. Hess, Marx wrote to Engels, was one of "those pieces of party excrement" that their chief socialist rival Ferdinand Lassalle "keeps on collecting for his manure factory." And Engels wrote Marx gleefully about having seduced Hess's wife.



Church-like Halls of Science were erected, and followers held Sunday meetings where they sang from a socialist hymnal.

Hess's socialism was of a piece with other new ideas flooding out of German universities in the early 1800s. A generation of intellectually restless youth was aiming "to find in art or science the path to individual or national salvation which the orthodox Christian churches seemed no longer capable of providing for critical minds," as Isaiah Berlin put it. Similar quests were pursued in England, Italy, and France—the nation that had done the most to create the vacuum that the new systems were designed to fill.

France was the capital of the Enlightenment, an eighteenth-century intellectual movement spearheaded by writers relentlessly critical of the church and revealed religion. Their crusade was effective, especially among the ranks of the articulate and high-born. "Frank atheism was still comparatively rare, but among the enlightened scholars, writers, and gentlemen who set

Joshua Muravchik is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. This is excerpted from his forthcoming book Heaven on Earth: The Rise and Fall of Socialism.

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the intellectual fashions of the later eighteenth century, frank Christianity was even rarer," writes E. J. Hobsbawm.

During the French Revolution, the Christian calendar was temporarily replaced by one in which the days, months, and seasons were renamed for plants and animals and types of weather. The Cathedral of Notre Dame was renamed the Temple of Reason. Yet, Will and Ariel Durant note, "a thousand superstitions survived side by side with the rising enlightenment." Madame de Pompadour, Louis XV's mistress, had her portrait painted surrounded by scientific implements, but she frequented a fortune teller who read the future in coffee grounds.

The pursuit of a life liberated from the "superstition" of religion proved surprisingly difficult. Even Diderot, whose *Encyclopedia* was the flagship of the Enlightenment, confessed that he could not watch religious processions "without tears coming to my eyes." Perhaps such unbidden feelings explain why, as most anthropologists agree, religion is universal. As scientist Edmund O. Wilson put it in his acceptance speech upon receiving the 1999 Humanist of the Year Award:

> There is no doubt that spirituality and religious behavior of some kind are extremely powerful and, it appears, necessary parts of the human condition.... The inability of secular humanist thinkers to satisfy this instinct, even when evidence and reason are on their side, is surely part of the reason that there are only 5,300 members of the American Humanist Association and 16 million members of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Accordingly, the Enlightenment's undercutting of Christianity left early nineteenth-century Europe hungering for a new faith. In Britain, church-like Halls of Science were erected by the followers of Robert Owen who held Sunday meetings where they sang from a socialist hymnal. But they were unable to fashion a coherent doctrine. Had socialism remained the work of such fanciful souls as these, it would have ended up as marginal as humanism, pacifism, vegetarianism, and so many other good-hearted but feckless theories.

Engels and Marx, however, succeeded in recasting socialism into a compelling prophecy, and their socialism absorbed or eclipsed all others. They shifted the argument from socialism's rationality or desirability to its inevitability. This claim of inevitability was not an intellectual weapon but a religious one. It had no logical weight but great psychological power. Like the Bible, Marxism's historical narrative was a tale of redemption that divided time into three epochs: a distant past of primitive contentment, a present of suffering and struggle, and a future of harmony and bliss. Nor was this the only way that socialism echoed revelation. It linked mankind's salvation to a downtrodden class, combining the Old Testament's notion of a chosen people with the New Testament's prophecy that the meek shall inherit the earth.

What is different about socialism as a religion is the absence of concepts of good and evil. This opened the door to terrible deeds.

By investing history with a purpose, socialism evoked passions that other political philosophies could not stir. As the American socialist intellectual Irving Howe put it:

> Not many people became socialists because they were persuaded of the correctness of Marxist economics, or supposed the movement served their 'class interests.' They became socialists because they were moved to fervor by the call to brotherhood and sisterhood; because the world seemed aglow with the vision of a time in which humanity might live in justice and peace.

Most socialists would deny that their creed is religious in character. Did not Marx say that religion is an opiate? But many have given evidence of the religious quality of their belief. Michael Harrington, a fallen-away product of Jesuit education who became the preeminent American socialist of his generation, wrote: "I consider myself to be—in Max Weber's phrase—'religiously musical' even though I do not believe in God.... I am...a 'religious nature without religion,' a pious man of deep faith, but not in the supernatural." Harrington's disciple, sociologist Norman Birnbaum, is even more blunt. "Socialism in all its forms was itself a religion of redemption," he writes.

Despite the prophetic character of its claims, Marxism managed to establish the idea that it was somehow "scientific." The term "science" had only fully come into vogue in the early 1800s, and science was discovering explanations every day for things that had long seemed inexplicable. By applying the terminology of science to human behavior, Marx and Engels developed a powerful cachet. Part of the power of Marxism was thus its ability to feed religious hungers while flattering followers that they were wiser than those who gave themselves over to unearthly faiths.

In addition, the rewards offered by socialism are more immediate than those of the Bible. For one thing, you do not have to die to enjoy them. As British Marxist Ernest Belfort Bax wrote, "socialism brings back religion from heaven to earth [it looks not] to another world but to...a higher social life... whose ultimate possibilities are beyond the power of language to express."

The same ecstatic tone reverberated in Trotsky's forecast that under socialism the average person would exhibit the talents of a Beethoven or Goethe, and in Harrington's vision of "an

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utterly new society in which some of the fundamental limitations of human existence have been transcended." In this paradise, "work will no longer be necessary.... The sentence decreed in the Garden of Eden will have been served."

The Biblical account of Adam and Eve's fall explains the hardship of life. It also portrays mankind's capacity for evil as well as good, suggesting that we might ameliorate the hardship by cultivating our better natures. But socialism makes things easier. Not only does it vow to deliver the goods in this world rather than the next, but it asks little in return. At the most, you have to support the revolution. At the least you do nothing, since "historical forces" will create socialism anyway.

In either case you do not have to worship or obey. You do not have to make painful sacrifices or give to charity. You do not have to confess or repent or encounter that tragic sense of life that is the lot of those who embrace a Biblical religion. No doubt, many or most people drawn to socialism feel some sense of humane idealism. But socialism's demands are all made on "society," not on individuals. It is idealism on the cheap.

Socialism's demands are all made on "society," not on individuals. It is idealism on the cheap.

If these are the things that made the religion of socialism so attractive, they also are what made it so destructive. What distinguished Biblical religion together with Eastern faiths such as Hinduism, Confucianism, and Buddhism from other supernatural beliefs, historian Herbert Muller notes, is that its "primary concern was no longer the material success of the nation or the assurance of good crops, but the spiritual welfare of man... rescuing man from his long obsession with food and phallus." More specifically, the religion of these faiths connected man to a moral code. Then, two and a half millennia later, the religion of socialism sundered that connection. What was different about socialism was not the absence of God, since Buddhism and Confucianism also have no God, but rather the absence of good and evil or right and wrong. This opened the doors to the terrible deeds committed in the name of socialism.

To be sure, horrible offenses have also been committed in the name of traditional religions. One can cite the Crusades, the Inquisition, the World Trade Center destruction, and more. But in attacking people they deem wayward, religious zealots must ignore or suppress core elements of their creeds that address moral commands to the believer, constraining his actions. Socialism lacks any such internal code limiting the believer's conduct.

The socialist narrative turns history into a morality play without the morality. No wonder, then, that its balance sheet looks so bloody. In about three centuries the Crusades claimed 2 million lives; Pol Pot snuffed out roughly the same number in a mere three years. Regimes calling themselves socialist have murdered more than 100 million people since 1917. The toll of all crimes by observant Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, or Hindus pales in comparison.

Of course not all socialists committed or condoned violence, many were sincere humanitarians, especially those who called themselves democratic socialists. But democratic socialism has turned out to be a contradiction in terms. Wherever socialists have proceeded democratically, they have found themselves on a trajectory that takes them further and further from socialism, much like Britain's Tony Blair or Germany's Gerhard Schröder. That's why, long before Lenin, socialist thinkers like Plato, More, Campanella, and Edward Bellamy all foresaw the necessity of coercion.

The Blairs and Schröders of the world claim that they can do a better job than their conservative opponents when it comes to managing the capitalist economy and maintaining a social safety net. Perhaps they can. But this is a far cry from the enticing visions of a whole new life of brotherhood and effortless abundance that made socialism so uniquely seductive and so appallingly destructive.

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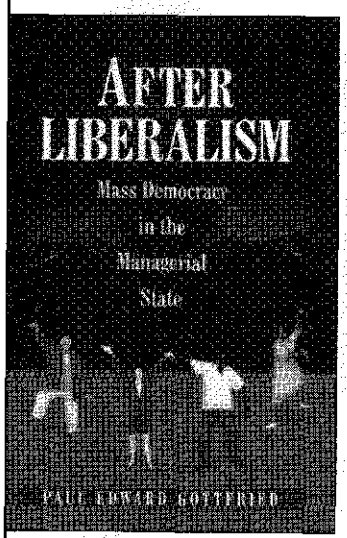
After Liberalism

Mass Democracy in the Managerial State

Paul Edward Gottfried



In this trenchant challenge to social engineering, Paul Gottfried analyzes a patricide: the slaying of nineteenth-century liberalism by the managerial state.

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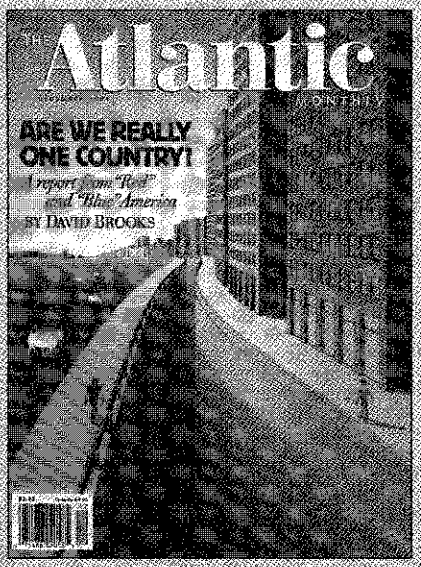

The Plains vs. The Atlantic

Is Middle America a backwater, or a reservoir?

By Blake Hurst

Like an anthropologist touring deepest, darkest Africa, the writer David Brooks has courageously trekked to Middle America, studied the natives there, and reported back to readers of *The Atlantic Monthly*, one of the nation's toniest opinion magazines. He reports that out here in Red America (as the last election maps dubbed George Bush country) we're dumber, poorer, fatter, and less well dressed than those in Blue America (the parts of the country that voted for Al Gore). At least, his data shows, our wives have more orgasms.

Brooks didn't do his investigating in actual fly-over country—not as far as I'm concerned anyway. His model for Red America was Franklin County, Pennsylvania (population 121,000). Brooks says Pennsylvanians joke that their state has "Philadelphia on one end, Pittsburgh on the other, and Alabama in the middle." Well, maybe, but any state that calls Arlen Specter a Republican isn't truly Red America.

According to Brooks, "We in the coastal Blue areas read more books and attend more plays than the people in the Red heartland. We're more sophisticated and cosmopolitan—just ask about our alumni trips to China or Provence, or our interest in Buddhism. But don't ask us, please, what life in Red America is like. We don't know." Brooks goes on at great length to fill in readers about the results of his Pennsylvania trip. But he misses a few things. In fact, it's quite easy to imagine that many of the observations Brooks records as Red America gospel were actually examples of the deer hunters and truck drivers of Franklin County having a little fun with the Ivy Leaguer from inside the Beltway.

Brooks is exactly right, though, when he talks about how

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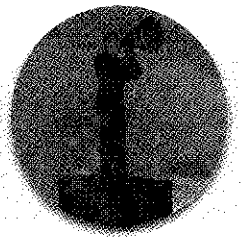
Middle Americans view their station on the economic ladder. He's surprised at the lack of class-consciousness, and Red Americans' willingness to consider themselves among the "haves," even when they're being paid at levels that wouldn't convince yuppie teenagers in Blue America to leave the house. Charles Murray has pointed out that true wealth in America is limited to the few entrepreneurs and inheritors of wealth who make up the *Forbes* 400…plus the upper income folks living in small-town America.

The combination of progressive taxation and urban real-estate prices ensures that almost nobody on the coasts has more spendable income than the highest paid people in Franklin County or the rest of rural Red America. People here in Missouri's small towns can buy a beautiful older home for less than $100,000. Brooks makes much of the fact that he literally could not spend more than $20 for a meal in Franklin County. The fare in Red America *is* a bit limited. You can't buy one of those meals with a dime-sized entrée in the middle of a huge plate, with some sort of sauce artfully squirted about. But you can buy a pound of prime rib for ten bucks. Class-consciousness isn't a problem in Red America, because most people can afford to buy everything that's for sale.



In Red America, patriotism didn't have to be relearned after September 11. Selfless sacrifice is still an honored tradition here.

Brooks touches on the non-pretentious nature of Red Americans. The guy in threadbare overalls just behind you at the parts counter may well be a multimillionaire. And Brooks is on target when he talks about the reaction Franklin County residents would have to a Lexus. A foreign-made car on Main Street of my small town is a sure indicator of a visitor, and it will be the only car in the whole town with its doors locked. The status vehicle here, of course, is a large SUV.

The lack of pretension extends to the way we dress. Our jeans are dirty not because they're rarely washed, but because we work with grease, dirt, or steel. That ground-in grime is a badge of a day's work well done. And no, Mr. Brooks, those are not pocketknives connected to those strings and chains you noticed extending from Red America's pockets, but wallets big enough to hold all the information in your palm pilot, plus the receipts from last week's business.

We are, for sure, fatter than the rest of America. But there's a certain freedom in a paunch, as it says to all that the work we do can be measured in bushels, pounds, shingles nailed, and bricks laid, rather than the fussy judgments that make up office employee reviews. And a little extra weight helps when you have to "grab aholt" of heavy things and make them move.

Blake Hurst has been a TAE *contributing writer since our inception.*

Contentment with one's lot may well be the greatest difference between Red and Blue America. People living in the great middle are perfectly happy to be slightly overweight, a little underpaid, and dressed in fashions that cause comment when we interact with our betters. We aren't overly impressed with formal credentials, often commenting that so and so is "educated beyond his level of competence." My congressman happens to be from our small town, and when he's home on the weekends, he's shingling his house. His constituents are proud of the fact that their representative can run a nail gun, and is still humble enough to get his hands dirty. Just the same, the project has taken over a year, and we all think it's time he finished.

We respect formal learning, but we value practicality over more esoteric fields of knowledge, and treasure self-sufficiency above all. "Settle down and go to work. Keep your mind on your own business. Think about what you're doing. Buckle down." All of these sayings, repeated ad nauseam in the workplace, on sporting fields, and at schools across Red America, are exhortations to seriousness, concentration, and the unfrivolous business of getting jobs done in the safest and most efficient manner.

Brooks details the religious differences between Red and Blue America, recognizes that we Red Americans have different religious beliefs than Blue Americans, and includes the familiar statistic that church attendance is a better predictor of voting patterns than is income (or most any other factor). But he finds no indication that Red America is about to man the ramparts in a culture war.

Blue America should really relax about this whole subject and quit worrying about people with bad haircuts showing up at their front doors talking about Jesus. Small-town Americans have to balance what we say and do with the necessity of getting along with the people we live with: people who have kids in the same schools, who do business with us, are on the school board with us, and may well go to the same church. As Brooks points out, living in a small town often leads to a greater level of tolerance, because we interact with everyone around us on so many levels. There are no anonymous store clerks or people in line at the checkout counter. Not only do we know the person ahead of us, but we can probably tell you the color of his pickup and may even remember the time he scored the winning touchdown in 1973.

And our religious beliefs do inform the way we vote and how we regard our public officials. We seldom debate politics or culture openly here, because we already know what our neighbors think. Our beliefs are not monolithic, but everyone knows his neighbors so well that he can predict how they'll react to most political questions. And by and large, all of us are pretty disgusted with the culture of Blue America.

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Most interesting about Brooks' article is that it is impossible to imagine a piece written from the opposite perspective. Would *The Atlantic* pay my way to go prowling around Chevy Chase, or the Hamptons, or Marin County, contrasting the culture there with the one I'm familiar with? Not likely. It's not that subscriptions to *The Atlantic* aren't sold in my part of the world. We Red America residents are much better informed about Blue America than the reverse.

A certain arrogance explains the lack of reciprocal interest. It seems that Blue Americans just can't imagine that the rest of the country isn't downright envious of the way they think, or dress, or spend their days. The differences between the two parts of the country can no longer be assigned to the provincialism of Middle Americans. The deregulation of airlines and communications, the Interstate system, and mail order have guaranteed that our exposure to coastal life is easy and cheap. Red America is peppered with satellite dishes, Internet connections, and book club memberships. In fact, these links may well be responsible for accentuating the nation's cultural divide. From the Playboy Channel to Johnnie Cochran to non-stop news about Monica, we get a bellyful of Blue America whether we want to or not.

Brooks recognizes that "one can barely find any books at Amazon.com about...small-town America—or at least, any books written by normal people who grew up in small towns, liked them, and stayed there." He describes how any books about my part of the country are "either by people who left the heartland because they hated it (Bill Bryson's *The Lost Continent,* for example), or by urbanites who moved to Red America as a part of some life-simplification plan." Brooks concludes: "Apparently no publishers or members of the Blue book-buying public are curious about Red America as seen through Red America's eyes."

The real reason for the lack of books about America's heartland by the people who actually live here is the assumption that small-town residents can't possibly live rich and interesting lives without Starbucks, modern art, and expensive universities. Brooks himself confides that he wouldn't want to live in Red America, because he finds our way of life "too unchanging." If one is happy, though, change isn't eagerly anticipated.

Most Red Americans can't deconstruct post-modern literature, give proper orders to a nanny, pick out a cabernet with aftertones of licorice, or quote prices from the Abercrombie and Fitch catalog. But we can raise great children, wire our own houses, make beautiful and delicious creations with our two hands, talk casually and comfortably about God, repair a small engine, recognize a good maple sugar tree, tell you the histories of our towns and the hopes of our neighbors, shoot a gun and run a chainsaw without fear, calculate the bearing load of a roof, grow our own asparagus, live in peace without car alarms, security guards, or therapists—even find the same wife a lifetime source of interest and joy.

Brooks is concerned that the differences between Red and Blue America will lead to a divided country, where the modes of living will be so different, and at such loggerheads, that common ground could be difficult to find. In truth, these divisions have always existed in our country, they're just now becoming emphasized. Sinclair Lewis wrote with love and hatred of Red America 80 years ago. I think most of the Snopeses worked on our farm for a while when I was a kid. And reading Faulkner just reintroduced me to my grandfather's neighbors. Davy Crockett was outsmarting city slickers from under his coon skin cap nearly two centuries ago, and *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* had a similar theme, contrasting rural values to the decadence of the nation's capital. The exceptional qualities of non-urban Americans are only an issue to the movers and shakers along the coasts when we surprise them by winning an election and the country doesn't go to hell in a handbasket after all.

One of the most interesting statistics that Brooks uses to contrast the two Americas is the fact that only 53 percent of conservatives consider themselves intellectuals, while 75 percent of self-identified liberals do. In the Red America I know, humility is a cardinal virtue, and most of us wouldn't be caught dead calling ourselves intellectuals, though we do often identify ourselves as conservative.

We're used to subtle condescension about our smarts. Brooks quotes SAT scores that show a marked difference between Waynesboro High in Franklin County and Walt Whitman High School in the D.C. suburb of Bethesda. It's not surprising that one of the richest suburbs in the country would have higher scoring students than Franklin County. The real estate prices in the Bethesda area limit the students there to the progeny of people able to shop for the best schools, while Waynesboro no doubt matriculates students from all strata of Franklin County society. Brooks doubts that the products of Franklin County schools can compete in college with urban students. But it has been my observation that students from smaller, less challenging schools catch up with urban students in about two semesters, as psychological stability and hard work compensate for any inadequacies in high-school education.

After his sortie into the minefield of SAT scores, Brooks pretty well leaves the whole question of a Red-Blue intellectual gap alone, but it is certainly a subtext to his piece. While it's true that many of the best and brightest leave rural America at some point for college and city jobs, they often try to get back as soon as they can. Is it really so dumb to choose to live in a place where life is affordable, the roads aren't crowded, and you don't have to put up with obnoxious megalomaniacs and self-important snobs? Red America is full of smart people, as many employers are learning. It's just that intellect, like wealth, isn't flaunted here.

Veiled disdain for the intellectual wattage of the people of Middle America helps explain the media's shock when individuals like John Ashcroft perform well—as he did at his Senate hearing and in his conduct since confirmation as attorney general. Critics of Ashcroft are quick to remind us of his small-town upbringing, and his unabashed faith, and his father (who was a preacher in a conservative church), using those facts as a sort of shorthand for narrow-mindedness, indicators that a person is probably not up to life

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in the fast lane. Those of us who have known John Ashcroft for a long time aren't the slightest bit surprised at his aplomb in facing his critics, and his job performance since. Anybody paying attention and not blinded by the fact that he comes from Red America, where priorities are merely different, not lower, could see that Ashcroft's background was excellent preparation for the demands of his current responsibilities.

Residents of the "less sophisticated" part of the nation see examples of intellectually and professionally inspiring natives all around us. My father-in-law, after a successful career as an electrical engineer conducting research in the nuclear field, returned to central Missouri and started an apple orchard. He listens to opera in German, the news in Spanish, and recently had an article about stress testing printed in a peer-reviewed journal after conducting his experiment with tools he had in his farm shop, along with a few items from his kitchen. My high-school class of 65 includes engineers, a dentist, and a lawyer who recently won a case before the Supreme Court. My long-time hired hand has a son who is an engineer for Microsoft. Examples like this aren't hard to find in most any part of Red America.

> Is it really so dumb to choose to live in a place where life is affordable, the roads aren't crowded, and you don't have to put up with self-important snobs?

Aside from religion, one of the most marked differences between the two parts of our country is the way we think about the military. Red Americans and Blue Americans volunteer for military service at radically divergent rates, and we honor those who have served in the armed forces differently. It is a staple of post-Vietnam liberalism that black Americans bore an unfair burden during that war. That is not accurate—the black casualty rate in Vietnam tracked fairly closely with the minority population. It is, however, most certainly true that rural Americans, southerners in particular, bore a disproportionate part of our national fighting, then and in all engagements since. According to historian Victor Davis Hanson:

> The vast majority of those who fought in Vietnam as frontline combat troops—two thirds of whom were not drafted but volunteered—were disproportionately lower-income whites from southern and rural states. These were young men of a vastly different socioeconomic cosmos from the largely middle- and upper-class journalists who misrepresented them, the antiwar activists and academics who castigated them, and the generals of the military high command who led them so poorly.

The prayer list at my small Southern Baptist church is currently full of families with loved ones deployed to the Middle East or Central Asia. I wonder how many churches in Bethesda are similarly occupied. Every small town I travel through in my region has a monument in the city square, or a plaque at the city park, listing those who were lost in each of America's wars. The rosters run on and on. Red America may be deficient in producing poets and advertising men, but the guy who used to sell me gas was a paratrooper on D-Day, and I spent an interesting hour at my wedding reception with two close relatives, on different sides of the family, discussing their tours of duty in Korea.

Red America is never redder than on our bloodiest battlefields. We may be thought of as hick cousins, we will always be caricatured for our faith in God, our children's accomplishments will probably be discounted by the most prestigious colleges, and Hollywood and Manhattan will always draw their rubes and villains in our clothes. But patriotism in Red America didn't have to be relearned after September 11. Selfless sacrifice is still an honored tradition in our communities, whether it takes place on the nation's battlefields or at home in the nursery.

Brooks ends his article wondering whether Americans will stay the course in the war against terrorism. After ten pages of patronizing my neighbors and me it's interesting that he's not worried a bit about Red America's response to the terrorist threat. Instead, he frets over the ability of his Blue neighbors to find the sturdiness required to win the war. So on the most important question to face our nation in decades, the gut instincts of middle America are, despite our SAT scores, the right ones.

Farmers like me spend a lot of time worrying about the state of our "subsoil moisture." In our part of the world, we almost never receive enough rain during the growing season to raise a successful crop, so we depend on the moisture stored in the deeper soil profile from late fall rains, winter snowstorms, and early spring downpours.

I often think that Red America serves as that same sort of reservoir for the rest of the country, supplying the moral perception and practical instincts, the life-giving moisture of good citizenship, that are necessary to the long-run survival of our nation. The deep soil profile is never as impressive as good black topsoil, and there is much less organic activity down there. The top layer of soil is where most of the life is located. But a good charge of moisture in those deeper, more stable regions saves us time and again during the scorching days of July and August.

Our nation is enduring a fierce heat wave right now. And in its midst I, for one, am very glad to have a group of men and women drawn primarily from the "less sophisticated" and "unchanging" midlands of our country leading us to our destiny.

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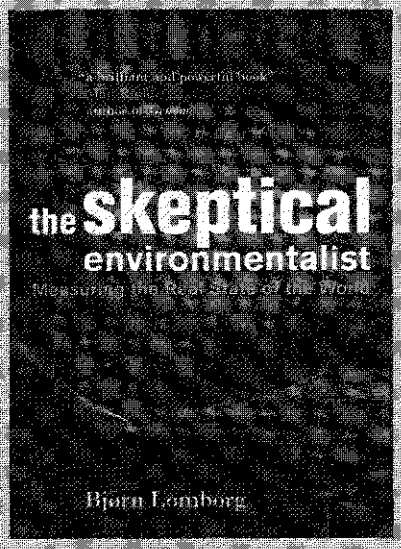

Land War

An ecological optimist vs. his critics

By Eli Lehrer

Bjørn Lomborg is a mild-mannered Danish statistics professor who believes in environmental protection laws, votes on the political left, avoids eating meat, and thinks that governments should redistribute wealth. In college, he belonged to Greenpeace. And the left-wing environmental movement hates him with a passion.

This hatred stems from Lomborg's new book, an occasionally turgid, 515-page Cambridge University Press tome called *The Skeptical Environmentalist*. It's rare that a book so modest in many of its central contentions and so rife with the trappings of careful scholarship creates such an intellectual firestorm. When *TAE* called Lester Brown, the president of the Earth Policy Institute and a leading environmental pessimist, his secretary answered the phone. "He doesn't think it's worth talking about," she shouted while slamming down the telephone receiver.

Other environmental groups reacted much the same way: *Grist*, an online magazine which publishes under the banner "Gloom and Doom with a Sense of Humor," devoted an entire special issue to attacking Lomborg and received a record amount of e-mail in response. Some of the denunciations have been notably rash and unbalanced: One opponent threw a pie in Lomborg's face during a book signing. *Scientific American* and *Nature* have piled on with scathing assaults. Nearly every major environmental group and a decent number of scientists have joined the battle.

For all this fuss, *The Skeptical Environmentalist* advances a relatively modest thesis from a mostly neutral political viewpoint. As Lomborg summarizes for *TAE*, "The environmental movement believes that just about all ecological indicators are getting worse all the time. That's not the case. It's not the case at all. The world is not about to fall off of a precipice." The book covers a tremendous amount of ground, and puts hundreds of environmental myths to rest. It's important for the breadth and depth of its argument alone. Lomborg's work, it's true, has some flaws. But his arguments promise to pave the way for a productive reshaping of the entire debate over the environment. And that's why the book evokes fear and hatred from the environmental Left.

The Skeptical Environmentalist takes on what Lomborg calls "The Litany": the environmental movement's belief in a gloomy future as a result of humanity's destruction of the Earth's air, water, plants, and animal life. Lomborg argues that, on the contrary, "We are not running out of energy or nat-

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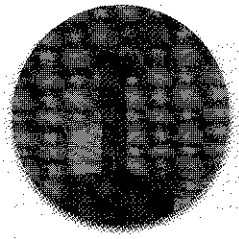
ural resources." He notes that "fewer and fewer people are starving," and calculates that there will be more food per person even with a larger world population in the decades ahead. He reports that global poverty has been reduced "more in the last 50 years than in the preceding 500 years." His chapter on global warming concludes there is no reason to view it as a devastating problem for our future. Nor, he finds, will we lose half of all living species to extinction, as environmentalists like to claim.

Lomborg argues, in short, that human welfare has improved by almost every measurable index. In densely argued, data-packed pages, Lomborg contends that all environmental problems are soluble and, at least in the First World, some have already been solved. Prosperity and technology, not draconian regulations, Lomborg argues, lead to rising living standards and an improved environment. Even in the Third World things are getting better in many ways—fewer people go to bed hungry, incomes are higher, and some environmental conditions are improving. Still, the picture is not altogether sunny: Environmental degradation continues in poor countries; global warming could well cost several trillion dollars over the next century; water has become dangerously dirty in some places; and great numbers of species will vanish.



This book evokes fear and hatred from the environmental Left.

Lomborg warns that the media and the public have swallowed huge amounts of nonsense about the environment because of an inability to see environmental advocates as self-interested and worthy of the same suspicion that is typically reserved for profit-making corporations. "We see environmental groups as being 'nice.' And a lot of the people involved in them are. Spending a few months in a raft to save the whales isn't always pleasant, and the people doing it are serving a higher purpose," he says. "But, at the same time, we have to remember that the environmental groups have their own agendas, their own interests and financial stakes, and just as we treat corporations with skepticism, we should treat environmental groups the same way."

Lomborg's argument isn't entirely new. The late Julian Simon, an economist at the University of Maryland, advanced much the same case in his 1981 book *The Ultimate Resource*. Gregg Easterbrook, a writer for *The New Republic* and a fellow of the Brookings Institution, argued essentially the same points in 1994's *A Moment on the Earth*.

Lomborg, an associate professor of statistics at the University of Aarhus in Denmark, initially set out to disprove Simon. "I thought, 'This can't possibly be true.'" But, when he assigned a team of students to check out Simon's work Lomborg found surprising results. Simon, Lomborg says, "wasn't right about absolutely everything but he was right about many things." As he burrowed deeper into the data, Lomborg came to agree with the optimistic Simon more and more; ultimately he used a quote from Simon to open *The Skeptical Environmentalist*.

Lomborg is different from Simon, though, in that he doesn't have a clearly defined ideology. "Sometimes Simon says things are true that he simply wishes were true," says Lomborg. "That doesn't make them true." While *The Skeptical Environmentalist* takes positions on controversial issues ranging from the Kyoto agreement on global warming (against) to global trade agreements (for), it's hard to tell what Lomborg thinks about broader political issues. In fact, he's been reluctant to talk about politics whatsoever.

"I haven't wanted to answer that question at all," he says when asked about his political views. "But people want to know what

A sample from *The Skeptical Environmentalist*

The opening of chapter 23, "Biodiversity":

"We lose something in the region of 40,000 species every year, 109 a day. One species will be extinct before you have finished reading this chapter.

This was what we were told 22 years ago when Norman Myers first published his book *The Sinking Ark* in 1979. The message was relayed to the world at large in the official U.S. environment report *Global 2000*. After this it became part of our shared consciousness: Former U.S. Vice President Al Gore repeats the figure of 40,000 species in his *Earth in the Balance*, the popular science magazine *Discover* tells us that half the species we know today will be extinct within the next 100 years, and the famous Harvard biologist E. O. Wilson points out that we are losing between 27,000 and 100,000 species a year. Not to be outdone, professor Paul Ehrlich even estimated in 1981 that we lose some 250,000 species every year, with half of the Earth's species gone by the year 2000 and all gone by 2010-25.

Although these assertions of massive extinction of species have been repeated everywhere you look, they simply do not equate with the available evidence..."

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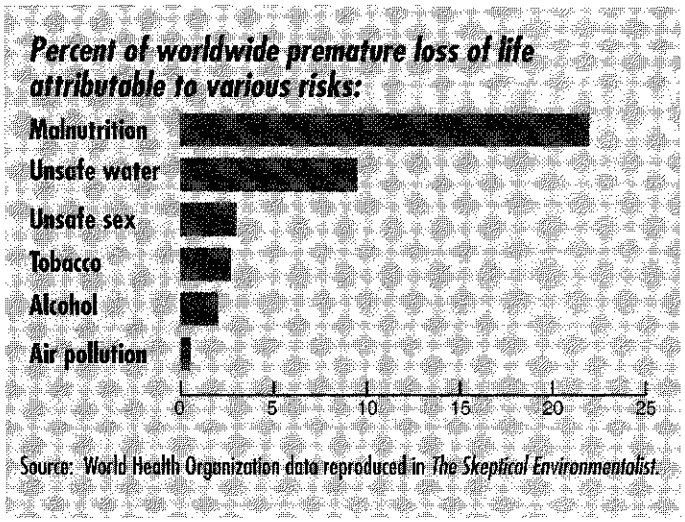

kind of guy someone is.... Well, I am someone on the Left. I vote in the center of Danish politics, which is the left of American politics." Lomborg believes in markets for producing goods and services, but wants governments to intervene to redistribute wealth and, yes, reduce pollution. "The clean air laws in the United States and much of the rest of the West were a good investment," he says. "We shouldn't repeal them."

"I was a person who went to Greenpeace meetings once in a while," he says. Asked about his personal life, Lomborg rails off a pedestrian list of interests: "I like going to cafes, visiting friends, going to clubs. The normal things." Despite his movie star looks—think Robert Redford 20 years ago—Lomborg can be awfully dull when he begins rattling off statistics about fish catches and timber harvests.

The very dullness of Lomborg's case, and his reliance on data rather than a commitment to an ideology, may have produced his book's good reviews in the American press. The liberal *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* both heaped praise on Lomborg and *The Skeptical Environmentalist*, something they would never have done with the more libertarian Julian Simon. While journals like *Scientific American* and *Nature* have blasted Lomborg (unfairly at times), and the environmental movement has gone ballistic over his work, the good reviews of *The Skeptical Environmentalist* have been more influential than the bad ones.

The sheer breadth of Lomborg's case also has something to do with its warm reception. Want to know about allergies and asthma? Turn to page 185 for a chapter on the topic. World zinc reserves? Page 145. Just about every issue of concern relating to the planet's environment gets covered in great, often excruciating, detail. On many topics, Lomborg blows environmentalist doomsaying out of the water. His wealth of detail, however, is what really sets the book apart from its intellectual predecessors. He uses public and governmental sources (the best available in most cases, but, as his critics have pointed out, not sources entirely beyond reproach), and he footnotes his work exhaustively.

In his examination of global warming, for instance, Lomborg not only goes over all the potential benefits of the Kyoto Treaty (less severe weather, less pollution) and its potential costs (trillions of dollars in lost GDP and sharply lower living standards), but also provides a flood of relevant statistics on everything from temperature fluctuations to economic effects. The conclusion: Global warming is real and may have significant disadvantages if left unchecked, but technical advances in nonpolluting energy sources represent a far better way of mitigating the problem than the massive regulations and steep reductions in energy use the Kyoto accords demand. "The agreement won't pay off," he contends.

That same sort of steely thinking continues in other chapters. A look at endangered species and deforestation concludes that human habitation has sent hundreds of animal species to their doom and will eliminate many hundreds more over the next century. But the costs of losing these species are not so great compared to the environmental benefits of economic development in the Third World. Estimates of the importance of individual species are highly tenuous, Lomborg finds, while the ecological and other benefits of development are real, immediate, and immense. "It's not that we want a situation where we lose all of these species. A lot of organisms will be wiped out—about 1.4 percent of all species over the next century," Lomborg laments. "But it's not as if we're going to live in a world without animals." A more immediate environmental concern of Lomborg's is that water supplies in much of the Third World have become dangerously polluted. Cleaning water and providing better treatment against water-borne illnesses would save far more lives at far lower costs than implementing the Kyoto protocols, he shows.

Lomborg's work proves just as complete when he's taking on the contention that the world is running out of resources. Here, he musters a truly impressive trove of data. Nearly every important resource has become cheaper over the past 30 years, while known reserves have actually swelled despite increasing rates of use.

Lomborg does sometimes demonstrate a tendency to take on straw men. While true alarmists like Lester Brown do continue to contend that nearly all natural resources will run out in the near future, mainline environmental groups like the Sierra Club have mostly let those old arguments fall by the wayside. The alarmists are much less influential in the scientific mainstream than they are in the media. Even the more radical environmental groups such as the World Watch Institute probably wouldn't go out of their way to refute Lomborg's facts about the world's store of resources.

Lomborg also occasionally seems to show an active dislike for the environmental movement's achievements. A chapter on air pollution acknowledges that pollution control laws have helped to make the atmosphere cleaner. It spends far more time, though, taking apart alarmist arguments than describing the benefits of certain environmental efforts.

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The reactions of scientists have been mixed. Richard Lindzen, an atmospheric scientist at MIT, offers a resounding endorsement. "He sticks to the conventional wisdom of science and asks all the right questions," says Lindzen. "It's a solid piece of work."

Michael Grubb, a professor at Imperial College in London who reviewed *The Skeptical Environmentalist* for *Science* came to a mixed assessment. "The book pulls together a lot of interesting data. It contributes to the debate," he says. But Grubb thinks Lomborg pushes a "don't worry" message much too strongly. "He revels too much in caricatures, and falls into some of the same traps of selectivity for which he lambastes the environmental movement." Reached in his London office, Grubb says he found the book weakest in his own specialty of climatology but thought that it provided some useful data to rebut more extreme environmentalists in other areas.

Lomborg has not written a perfect book by any standards. *The Skeptical Environmentalist* contains some outright errors (corrected on Lomborg's Web site), and it may overstate its case on issues ranging from global warming to forest loss. Lomborg produced the book with assistance from a team of his "very brightest undergraduate" students, and in a few places (superfluous footnotes, factual errors) this approach seems to have caught up with him. Nearly everyone *TAE* spoke with, even those who were sympathetic to the book, said that it showed signs of hurry. Most of the outright errors, however, involve rather inconsequential points, which don't undermine the book's fundamental arguments.

Scientists unsympathetic to Lomborg point to a deeper flaw: a tendency to err on the side of the most optimistic estimates when talking about future trends. The book's first half, devoted to rebutting the assessment that environmental conditions are getting worse, stands up to even the most extreme scrutiny. Later portions of the manuscript presenting relatively optimistic scenarios of the future are inherently more contentious.

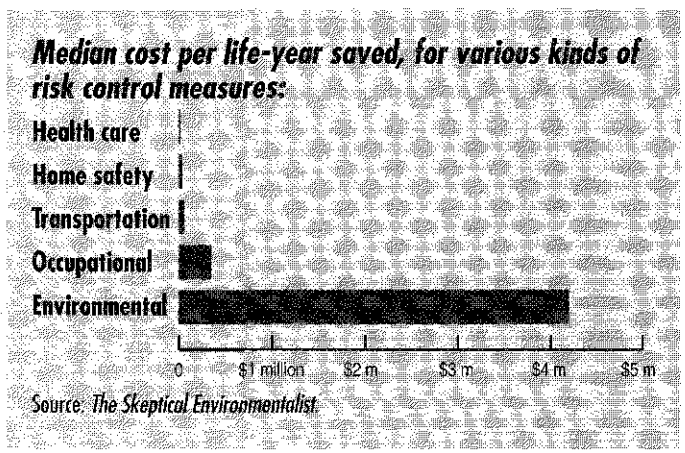
> Environmental groups have their own agendas, special interests, and financial stakes, and should be treated with skepticism just like corporations.

Still, even Lomborg's harshest critics acknowledge that the book could serve some limited use as a rejoinder to extreme environmentalism. "Of course the environmental movement exaggerates," says Steven Schneider, a Stanford University climatologist and environmental policy analyst who has emerged as one of Lomborg's foremost opponents. "I say it in all of my classes. But Lomborg exaggerates too. He exaggerates a lot." Even Stuart Pimm, a Columbia University biologist who takes a gloomy view of the environment, admits that the Green movement's own exaggerations have set the stage for a book like Lomborg's. "I was told the other day about a package of coffee which says on it that 74 species go extinct every day. That's incredibly precise and rather wrong," he says. But Pimm insists Lomborg's book is also sloppy and dishonest. "I'm incredibly critical of the World Watch Institute [a group Lester Brown founded] for the way they mine U.N. data," says Pimm. "They just take it on faith. You have to sometimes look at even official data more cleverly. But that's not what [Lomborg] does."

While there's plenty of room for criticism of Lomborg's book, some of the attacks reek of desperation. Every critic *TAE* spoke with lambasted Lomborg for having a limited scientific background in the areas he explores. Lomborg has a doctorate in statistics but is not an environmental scientist.

But if a book synthesizing data from many different scientific fields like this were allowed to be written only by someone with a Ph.D. in every field he or she discussed, it would never be written. If Lomborg disputed the underlying models scientists use in each area, or forwarded new hypotheses, then these critics would have a point. But *The Skeptical Environmentalist* is mostly a work of statistical assessment. The science is complex enough at times that Lomborg sometimes makes mistakes, perhaps serious ones. But writing this sort of overarching book is actually a task perfectly suited to a statistician skilled at wading through reams of existing data, rather than an area specialist.

Lomborg's book is overly ambitious for sure, and likely overoptimistic about the future. But it also lays bare hundreds of false and misleading claims about the state of our environment. In so doing, it exposes the environmental movement as another special interest group in need of critical scrutiny. For that alone, thinking people everywhere owe Lomborg a debt of gratitude.



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Democracy vs. Capitalism

By John Mueller

Democracy and free-market capitalism seem to suffer from image problems—opposite ones, as it happens. Capitalism is much better than its image; Democracy has turned out to be much worse.

Although capitalism is generally given credit, even by its detractors, for generating wealth and stimulating economic growth, it is continually maligned for its seeming celebration of greed. But actually, capitalism tends to reward business behavior that is honest, fair, civil, and compassionate. And it inspires a form of risk-taking behavior that can often be characterized as heroic.

Meanwhile, democracy is often presented in an idealized manner: citizens participating on an equal basis in enlightened deliberations about the affairs of governance. By contrast, actual democracy is often found to be disappointingly wanting—notable chiefly for discord, inequality, apathy, hasty compromise, political and policy ignorance, and manipulative scrambling by "special interests."

These disconnections can have significant, and often detrimental, consequences. The mismatch of capitalism with its image can damage economic growth, particularly if people in business embrace the negative stereotype. The democracy mismatch can eventually result in cynicism about the democratic process—even to the point of inspiring a yearning to scrap the system entirely.

The negative perception of capitalism has been propagated not only by communists and socialists, but by the church, popular culture (including capitalist Hollywood), intellectuals, aristocrats, and often by capitalists themselves—particularly those who have lost out in the competitive process. Swindlers and moral monsters sometimes do become rich (in both capitalist and noncapitalist systems), but contrary to the popular notion, capitalism by its nature rewards many virtuous behaviors. It generally inspires industriousness, farsightedness, diligence, and prudence. Businesses have found that "Honesty is the best and most profitable policy," that "A happy employee is a productive employee," and that "The customer is always right." These are soundly practical guidelines, and part of a broader set of self-effacing moral principles that are, on average, wealth-enhancing.

This is not to say that capitalists necessarily and always behave virtuously. Many, indeed, have lied, cheated, acted shabbily, and let themselves be dominated by arrogance and ego. But such behavior is economically foolish.

Nor does the existence of the capitalist virtues mean that there is no room for government, or that capitalism can be entirely self-regulating. Societies may find it useful, usually for non-economic reasons, to use tax policy and regulation to redistribute wealth, to aid the unfortunate, to enhance business competition, to regulate for public health and safety, or to control undesirable side effects such as air pollution. Societies may also consider it desirable to ban or inconvenience the propagation of certain goods and services for which there is profitable demand—like drugs, pornography, prostitution, cigarettes, liquor, and gambling. And it should be emphasized that capitalists do not pursue virtue to the point of stupidity: Virtues do not require one to cut an unfavorable deal or trust a swindle.

But virtue is, on balance and all other things being equal, essentially smart business under capitalism: Nice guys, in fact, tend to finish first. Some scoundrels do become rich, even as some heavy smokers escape cancer. But just as not smoking is, in general, good for your health, virtuous business behavior is, in general, good for your bottom line.

Capitalism's image mismatch can hamper economic development—because without the unacknowledged capitalist virtues, countries remain mired in poverty. Fortunately, virtuous capitalist behavior does not need to be artificially imposed by outside authority where it is lacking, because it can arise from normal competitive pressures. For that to happen, however, market competition must be allowed, and sometimes the widely accepted negative view of capitalism keeps this from happening.

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Democracy suffers from the opposite image problem. After democracy came into being in large countries some 200 years ago, a remarkable dilemma emerged. On the one hand, democracy worked rather well: When compared to competing forms of government, democracy produced more humane, flexible, productive, and vigorous societies. It yielded responsive and able leaders (at least in comparison to most kings, czars, or dictators).

On the other hand, democracy hasn't come out looking the way many theorists imagined it could or should. It has been characterized by a great deal of unsightly and factionalized squabbling among self-interested, shortsighted groups. And most citizens seem disinclined to deliberate on politics the way idealists would like.

Theorists and reformers have generally responded to this with disappointment. Some conclude that democracy is just an attractive, impossible dream. Others try to refashion democratic institutions—and sometimes human nature—to approximate more nearly their rarefied theories. Democracy, urged John F. Kennedy, "requires the highest qualities of self-discipline, restraint, a willingness to make commitments and sacrifices for the general interest, and it also requires knowledge."

These kinds of claims only result in a *bigger* mismatch between democracy's reputation and the realities of human nature. And the blame lies more with our ideals than with the facts of life.

The truth is, perfect democracy is an oxymoron, and the undisciplined, chaotic, and essentially unequal interplay of "special interests" is democracy's whole *point.* The inevitable contrast between democracy's rough-and-ready reality and the hopelessly idealized conception so sonorously promulgated by people like Kennedy only inspires the very cynicism that democracy idealists bemoan and profess to want to reduce. What purists like to dismiss as "politics as usual" is actually just real democracy in action.

Ralph's Pretty Good Grocery in Lake Wobegon, a Minnesota town invented by humorist Garrison Keillor, operates under the sensible, if rather unexhilarating, slogan: "If you can't find it at Ralph's, you can probably get along without it." Both democracy and capitalism have triumphed, despite their image problems, in large part because people have been persuaded to accept a version of Ralph's slogan: The systems don't supply everything, but if you can't get it with democracy and capitalism, you can probably get along without it.

It is possible to create a society in which order reigns supreme, where there is none of the disorienting "churn" that characterizes both capitalism and democracy. But bitter experience shows such a society comes at the cost of flexibility, responsiveness, intellectual growth, and individual freedom. It's therefore better, on balance, to get along without the blessings an orderly society can bring.

Likewise, capitalism requires toleration of a considerable amount of insecurity, risk, and uncertainty. It may be possible, at least in principle, to design an economy in which individual station, prices, employment, and essential provisioning are authoritatively controlled. We've learned, though, that that approach stifles the invigorating effects of economic liberty, leading to slower growth and significantly less wealth overall. Experience thus suggests it is better to get along without total economic security.

Both capitalism and democracy leave individuals free to pursue their interests, recognizing that some will simply do better in the pursuit than others. Unequal results will often emerge—because people have different capabilities. For some persons, particularly for those who are inclined to overrate their own abilities, this condition is deeply unpleasant, even unbearable. They become resentful.

Inequality will sometimes also result just because people have different luck. Some individuals just happen to be in the right place at a crucial moment. Sometimes an ill-considered, even foolish, gamble just happens to pay off. In an important sense, then, freedom is notably unfair.

But democracy is perhaps worse than capitalism in this regard. Capitalism does not profess to make everyone equally wealthy. The beguiling notion that "all men are created equal," however, has often been taken to suggest that some sort of equal outcome is guaranteed. Democracy, then, might seem somewhat hypocritical.

Capitalism and democracy can't supply complete orderliness, certainty, equality, security, and fairness. They are thus only pretty good—in the Ralph's Grocery sense. The laid-back perspective of the folks at Ralph's Pretty Good Grocery isn't very exhilarating, but it nicely avoids the dangers of overpromising.

And compared to their respective images, capitalism and democracy are pretty good in opposite senses. Democracy compared to its image is *merely* pretty good. While capitalism compared to its image is *actually* pretty good.

I suggest that one test of a fundamentally sound social institution is whether it can function adequately without demanding that people rise above the ignorance and selfishness with which they have been so richly endowed by their Creator. To put it gently, human beings are a flawed bunch, so any institution that's going to be successful had better be able to work with human imperfections, rather than requiring that the race first be reformed into perfection.

We're very fortunate that democracy doesn't require people to be good or noble, but merely to calculate what is best for them or their society, and then to act only if they happen to be so inclined. We are very fortunate that capitalism raises and transforms selfishness and acquisitiveness into higher purposes. Democracy and capitalism are about as romantic as, in Charlotte Brontë's phrase, Monday morning. But that is a good thing.

John Mueller is a professor of political science at Ohio State University. This is adapted from his book Capitalism, Democracy, & Ralph's Pretty Good Grocery, *recently issued in paperback.*

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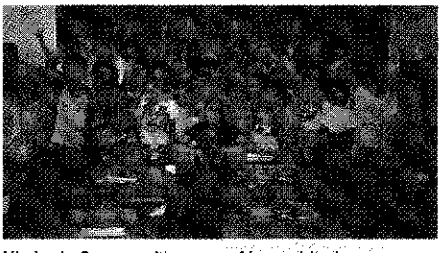
Living in the Two Chinas



Kimberly Spears with some of her spirited Chinese students.

By Kimberly Spears

BEIJING—Going off to China to teach English early last year was one of those "I can do anything now that I'm a college graduate" decisions that took exactly 30 seconds of intense deliberation. The sensible reservations caught up with me later.

Nervous and filled with dread, I walked into my first class at Wan Quan Elementary in Beijing. There I stood, confronted with 45 antsy eight-year-olds who all looked the same to me. I had never been an elementary school teacher. Part of me wanted to turn around and head straight for the door. But I stayed—that morning, and the rest of the school year.

My average day required teaching three second-grade morning classes at Wan Quan, then shifting to Yu Ying Elementary where I conducted three afternoon classes. At Wan Quan I taught alone, struggling daily to keep my exuberant students happy, learning, and under control. Yu Ying offered me a Chinese aide, whom I accepted gratefully.

The longer I taught, the more apparent the differences between the schools became. Yu Ying had been established in the early years of the Communist Party at the Party's headquarters. Mao's own children had attended the school, and it became one of the premier institutions for the children of state officials. Even by American standards the current version has many luxurious amenities, including three music studios, a dance studio, a recording studio, state-of-the-art science equipment, excess teachers, and an extremely dedicated staff.

Only three miles away from this bastion serving the offspring of the Party elite, my other school—Wan Quan—seemed to exist in a different era. The children there came from working families. They arrived at school in dirty, tattered clothes and rarely had paper or more than a pencil or two. Cold and dark in the winter, uncomfortably hot in the summer, the school lacked everything from basic teaching supplies to adequate plumbing. In the summer it wasn't unusual for the rank smell of the toilets to permeate the air.

While my students thrived at Yu Ying, I felt stymied at Wan Quan by the increasingly difficult task of keeping a rein on the children for more than two minutes at a time. Every time I disciplined a child, it caused trauma. I made Harold cry; John spit all over my shoes when I told him to stand up; when I sent Paul to the front of the classroom, I turned around to find he had scribbled "S.O.S. W.C." on the chalkboard. This eight-year-old appeal to use the restroom made me burst out laughing, which of course caused me to completely lose control of the class. These constant disruptions left me deflated and exhausted at the end of the day.

My two schools existed in different worlds, and I struggled daily to understand the disparity between them. It seemed a blatant and ironic example of the very inequity the Communists had claimed to eradicate.

I observed the same imbalance on a larger scale in Beijing city life generally. I lived on the edge of Beijing's ghetto, on the western corner of the city. There, dirt roads were littered with rotting food and used coal bricks, dilapidated two-room huts housed a family or more, and children played in the sewers. It wasn't unusual to see whole families living in the same one-room store in which they worked. Other than the Coke bottles and blaring TV sets, this section of town showed few signs of progress from over half a century ago.

Only five miles from my apartment though, the city center thrived. Mammoth malls filled with European goods crowded Chang 'An Road, with its traffic jams of Volkswagens, Audis, and Mercedes. The streets were swept clean; grass and flowers planted everywhere. There, one could find the seat of government, the Monument to the People's Heroes, Mao's tomb, the luxurious Beijing Hotel, the international financial district, and about ten McDonald's restaurants. Downtown Beijing had become the perfect union of old-regime power and capitalism.

Like many in Beijing's emerging middle class, my students at Yu Ying have mostly left behind the oppression, poverty, and backwardness of Communist China. But only with social and political reform equal to China's economic expansion will my children from Wan Quan enjoy the laurels of freedom as well.

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Next Stop Iraq?

AP/World Wide Photos/Maxim Marmur

Former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

Remarks of former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at a recent discussion held at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C.

President Bush declared shortly after September 11 that the United States would make no distinction between terrorists and the regimes that sponsor them. He said, "If you harbor terrorists, you are a terrorist; if you finance terrorists, you are a terrorist." His colleagues across the Atlantic conveyed a similar message. "Surrender terrorism, or surrender power," said the prime minister of Britain.

"The Taliban regime of Afghanistan is only the beginning," the President declared. He promised not to stop with the unseating of Mullah Omar and his henchmen, nor with the elimination of Osama bin Laden. He promised to march onward to the other breeding grounds of terror. Some regimes will have to be toppled, some punished and deterred, but all must be made to understand the simple message: surrender terrorism or surrender power.

This message is crucial to victory in the current war, because without the support of sovereign states, the entire scaffolding of international terrorism will collapse. The countless terrorist cells that are being discovered or will be discovered across Europe and America, while dangerous in themselves, are no more than grapes on the vine of terror. Uproot the vines, and those grapes will disappear.

One victory for terrorism, any victory, emboldens the entire terror network. A defeat in any part of the network, likewise, makes terrorists everywhere run for cover. In Afghanistan we were told that thousands of Islamic militants would stream in to help the Taliban wage war against the West. Instead, the fury of the forces aligned with America and Britain has created a mass flood of Taliban and al-Qaeda forces fleeing the country. Victory breeds victory for either side in the war on terror. When we win, they contract. When we lose, they grow stronger.

Stopping terrorism doesn't necessarily require ending conflict. For example, Muammar Qaddafi thinks the U.S. is the Great Satan. And for years he backed up that conviction with terrorism against the U.S. and Western targets. And then one day, President Reagan bombed Libya, and Qaddafi was nearly killed. For the last 15 years or so, Qaddafi has stopped all terrorism (with the exception of one case alone). The conflict continues, but terrorism has stopped.

Or, to take another case: For years, Syria propagated Kurdish terrorism against Turkey. An enormous number of Turks died in attacks launched from Syria into Turkish territory. Then one day in 1999, the Turks moved the bulk of their army to the Syrian border—the Turkish army is much bigger than the Syrian army—and they said, "Surrender terrorism or surrender power; we're going to invade." And Syria stopped, even though the conflict over a piece of territory both Syria and Turkey claim as their own continues. The point is, it is possible to stop terrorism or reduce it greatly just by making it very costly.

Today, we know that two of the states underpinning the terrorist network —Iran and Iraq—are rapidly developing atomic weapons in addition to the biological and chemical weapons they already possess. These weapons could mete out destruction on a scale that would dwarf even the towering tragedies of September 11. American leaders understand there is a need to act against these regimes while they still lack the power to destroy us all.

It will be an unmitigated disaster if we are unable to arrest the march of a hate-filled ideology toward the acquisition of the weapons of mass death. Islamic militants have irrational goals—the conquest of the world, and the taming of mankind to rules that are against human nature. Communists had similar irrational goals, but unlike Islamists, they pursued their goals very rationally. Every time they had to choose between their own survival and their ideology, Communists chose survival and backed off.

But Islamic militants may very well choose destruction. And this pathological streak is what makes militant Islam so dangerous. We are faced with enemies that, if they acquire weapons of mass death, will use them. Be absolutely confident about that.

We have to prevent these states from getting atomic weapons. Thus, the U.S. is eventually going to have to deal with Iraq.

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the New Deal Economist

Did the New Deal Actually Prolong the Great Depression?

By Jim Powell

The Great Depression was the most important economic event in twentieth-century American history, yet we know surprisingly little about it. Though the popular impression is that Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal policies brought about recovery, economic research developed in recent decades suggests the New Deal prolonged the Depression.

The most troubling issue is the persistence of high unemployment throughout the New Deal period: At no point during the 1930s did unemployment go below 14 percent. Living standards remained depressed until after World War II. Stanford University's David Kennedy seems to be the only major political historian to mention any of the research about the effects of New Deal policies. In the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Freedom from Fear* published in 1999, Kennedy concluded flatly that the New Deal "was not a recovery program, or at any rate not an effective one."

It's true the Great Depression was an international phenomenon. But compared to the United States, as economic historian Lester V. Chandler observed, "in most countries the depression was less deep and prolonged." While the U.S. made a modest recovery between 1933 and 1937, the 1937 peak was still lower than our previous economic peak in 1929, a highly unusual occurrence.

Scholarly investigators have raised some provocative questions about this. Why did New Dealers make it more expensive for employers to hire people? Why did New Deal policies discourage private investment, without which private employment was unlikely to revive? Why so many policies to push up the cost of living? To what extent did New Deal labor laws penalize blacks? Why was so much New Deal relief spending channeled *away* from the poorest people? The list of provocative questions goes on and on. And when researchers try to answer them, considerable evidence emerges that New Deal policies actually prolonged high unemployment.

During the 1930s, the Great Depression was widely blamed on stock market speculation, reckless banking practices, and a concentration of wealth in too few hands. The New Deal laws were drafted accordingly. Subsequent investigations, however, have convinced most economists that the Depression had little to do with any of those things. The most influential single work is *A Monetary History of the United States, 1867-1960*, published in 1963 by Milton Friedman and Anna Jacobson Schwartz, which documented the catastrophic one-third contraction of the money supply between 1929 and 1933. Princeton University economist Paul Krugman remarks that, "Nowadays, practically the whole spectrum of economists, from Milton Friedman leftward, agrees that the Great Depression was brought on by a collapse of effective demand, and that the Federal Reserve should have fought the slump with large injections of money."

Yet the Roosevelt administration didn't address Fed mistakes until FDR signed into law the Banking Act of 1935. Here the idea was to expand the power of the Federal Reserve Board in Washington, which meant that Fed mistakes could have an even bigger impact on the economy. The new Federal Reserve Board's first bad call came soon. Concerned about what appeared to be excess bank reserves which might lead to a surge of lending and inflation, the Fed doubled bank reserve requirements between August 15, 1936 and May 1, 1937. The strategy backfired: In an effort to rebuild excess reserves, banks cut their lending, contributing to the severe recession of 1938.

Nor did FDR do anything about unit banking laws that had doomed thousands of rural banks to failure in bad times. These laws limited banks to a single office, preventing them from diversifying their loan portfolios and their source of funds. When local depositors withdrew their funds, and local borrowers defaulted on their loans, the banks collapsed. Because Canada didn't have unit banking laws,

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even rural banks were able to diversify, and there weren't any bank failures in Canada during the Great Depression.

What FDR did, of course, was support federal deposit insurance. This has involved charging reckless banks the same premiums as prudent banks. Federal deposit insurance subsidizes reckless banks and passes the resulting losses to taxpayers—during the 1980s, the tab exceeded $500 billion.

Another of FDR's major banking reforms, the second Glass-Steagall Act, actually weakened the banking system by breaking up the strongest banks in order to separate commercial banking from investment banking. Universal banks (which served depositors *and* did securities underwriting) were much stronger than banks pursuing only one of these activities. Very few universal banks failed, and securities underwritten by universal banks were less risky. Why did Congress break them up? Two of the biggest lobbyists for Glass-Steagall were the Investment Company Institute and the Securities Industry Association—representing competitors of commercial banks who would benefit from having banks banned from their own business field.

FDR's tax increases also did much to prolong the Great Depression. Federal taxes more than doubled from $1.6 billion in 1933 to $5.3 billion in 1940. FDR raised personal income taxes, corporate income taxes, excise taxes, estate taxes, gift taxes, and liquor duties, and he introduced Social Security payroll taxes (Social Security taxes began in 1937, but Social Security benefits didn't begun until 1940). All these levies meant there was less capital for businesses to create jobs, and consumers had less money in their pockets.

Black people were among the major victims of the New Deal. Large numbers of blacks were unskilled and held entry-level jobs, and when New Deal policies forced wage rates above market levels, hundreds of thousands of these jobs were destroyed. Above-market wage rates encouraged employers to mechanize and in other ways cut total labor costs.

Government spending was touted as a cure for the Depression, but it didn't work.

At a time when millions of people had little money, New Deal policies made practically everything more expensive. In 1933, the worst point of the Depression, FDR pushed through Congress the National Industrial Recovery Act which promoted cartels in over 700 industries, aimed at maintaining consumer prices above market levels. People were jailed for discounting! Then came the Robinson-Patman Act, the Retail Price Maintenance Act, and the Civil Aeronautics Act, which maintained prices of thousands of products and services above market levels.

Perhaps the worst of the New Deal laws, from a consumer's point of view, were those like the Agricultural Adjustment Act which aimed to raise farm incomes by destroying food and forcing up food prices. These laws mainly enriched big farmers since New Deal farm subsidies were based on the amount of land one had. The laws displaced poor sharecroppers and tenant farmers. High farm foreclosure rates persisted during the New Deal, indicating that the Act did almost nothing for the poorest farmers.

While FDR authorized the spending of billions for relief and public works projects, a disproportionate amount of this money went not to the poorest states such as in the South, but to Western states where people were better off—apparently because these were "swing" states which could yield FDR more votes in the next election. The South was already solidly Democratic, so there wasn't much to be gained by buying support there.

Government spending was touted as a cure for the Depression, but it didn't work. In 1933, federal government outlays were $4.5 billion, and by 1940 had more than doubled to $9.4 billion. Unemployment remained stubbornly high.

Despite his charismatic personality and comforting "Fireside Chats," FDR failed to make the recovery of private, productive employment his top priority. Along with advisors like Louis Brandeis, Felix Frankfurter, Rexford Tugwell, and Thomas Corcoran, FDR viewed business as the *cause* of the Great Depression, and he did everything he could to restrict business. His goal was "reform," not recovery. Leading newspaper columnist Walter Lippmann observed at the time that New Dealers would "rather not have recovery if the revival of private initiative means a resumption of private control in the management of corporate business.... The essence of the New Deal is the reduction of private corporate control by collective bargaining and labor legislation, on the one side, and by restrictive, competitive, and deterrent government action on the other side."

Recent economic research on the effects of New Deal policies strongly suggests that the best way to promote a speedy recovery from depression is to let people keep more of their money, remove obstacles to productive enterprise, let markets rather than regulators make decisions, and provide stable money and a political climate where investors feel that it's safe to invest for the future.

Historian and Cato Institute fellow Jim Powell is working on a book about the effects of the New Deal.

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Vietnam, With Less Angst and Alienation

There is a scene in the script for the upcoming Vietnam War movie *We Were Soldiers* in which Mel Gibson's character, preparing to depart for Southeast Asia, learns that his regiment number is seven. "The *Seventh*?" he asks. "The same regiment as...Custer?"

Ultimately—and this news won't spoil the film—Gibson and his troops fare better than the general and his soldiers did at Little Big Horn. But that's not to say they have an easy go of it. *We Were Soldiers* is about one of the bloodiest battles in all of Vietnam, an engagement in which more than 200 Americans died, more than were killed in any regiment at Gettysburg.

Most of *We Were Soldiers*, scheduled for March release, is set in late 1965 in the Ia Drang Valley, or as it came to be known, the Valley of Death. It was the first location to see the entry of U.S. combat troops in significant numbers, and the carnage there nudged President Johnson toward his view that the war was unwinnable.

The battle was chronicled in stark detail in the 1992 book *We Were Soldiers Once...And Young* written by Hal Moore, an Army lieutenant general who was in the middle of it, and Joe Galloway, the UPI correspondent assigned to the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry. The commandant of the Marines selected it as the book of the year for the Corps when it was published. In the film, Moore is played by Gibson, and Galloway by Barry Pepper (the sniper in *Saving Private Ryan*).

Last fall, in the private Washington, D.C. screening room of Motion Picture Association chairman Jack Valenti, Moore and Galloway got to see Hollywood's version of the story. Sitting just a few seats over were Gibson and the picture's writer and director, Randall Wallace (the scriptwriter for *Braveheart*). President Bush's political advisor Karl Rove was also present.

For the most part, Moore tells *TAE*, he was pleased. This is a man who, in his book, rebuked Hollywood's traditional treatment of the war with the words: "We knew what Vietnam had been like, and...Hollywood got it wrong every damned time, whetting twisted political knives on the bones of our dead brothers."

Writer Wallace had his eye on Moore's story for years. Both the 120-page script and early reports from those who've seen the film, indicate that Wallace remained faithful to the book's key elements. *We Were Soldiers* shows in vivid detail how the enemy drew Americans into battle as a kind of training and dress rehearsal for engagements.

Viewers get a clear sense of how treacherous Ia Drang really was. At one point, the 450 men of Moore's battalion have more than 2,000 North Vietnamese arrayed against them. "Remember that intense 20-minute opening scene in *Saving Private Ryan*?" asks Moore. "Well, three fourths of this entire film is like that."

Moore suggests that Wallace's concentration on men in the front ranks—"how we fought for each other, and died for each other"—will go a long way toward elevating the standing of the Vietnam veteran. "It's a movie that will show that it's okay to hate war but love the American warrior," he says.

© Paramount Pictures

Mel Gibson in a scene from *We Were Soldiers*.

Toward the end of the picture, there is a scene with Moore, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, and General William Westmoreland, meant to send the book's message that Americans fought a "worthy enemy." McNamara and Westmoreland seem confident that U.S. troops will eventually "run the little bastards back home."

"If I were the leader of the other side, I would have been proud of them," says Gibson, as Moore. "They pushed 2,000 men through artillery and napalm.... They ran right at the muzzles of our guns. We took them hand to hand. And we won. But they didn't go away. They just backed up and came again. We won't run the little bastards home, sir. They are home."

It's all an embellishment; no such conversation ever took place. But that seems to bother General Moore only a little. "Randy Wallace told me, 'Hal, it's not a documentary on the History Channel.'" But at least it's not the low fraud of *Apocalypse Now* or *Full Metal Jacket*, either.

—John Meroney

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Flashback

To know nothing of what happened before you were born is to remain ever a child—Cicero

Property Owners Steamrolled by Highwaymen

Candy-maker and John Birch Society founder Robert Welch was labeled nutty as a fruitcake when he suggested that Dwight Eisenhower was an "agent of the communist conspiracy." But in one area, Welch's crazy charge contained a nugget of truth.

You see, Ike fathered the Interstate Highway System. His administration's flacks proudly called it the "greatest public works project in history," and maybe it was. But the Interstate program was also a socialist melding of industry and military that did more than almost any other act of government to uproot Americans.

Like so many of Leviathan's projects, the IHS was conceived in wartime. In 1944, Franklin Roosevelt's Interregional Highway Committee recommended that the federal government build a 41,000-mile interstate system. (As though Washington wasn't busy enough.)

General Eisenhower came home from Europe having been deeply impressed by Hitler's autobahn. A decade later, in June 1956, President Eisenhower would sign into existence the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways to build an American autobahn.

As the bill's name suggests, the plan to pave over America was cleverly sold as a critical Cold War weapon. The Interstate was "vitally essential for national defense," said the President. The four-wheeled patriots of Detroit revved their engines in agreement. (Ike's Secretary of Defense, "Engine Charlie" Wilson, came from General Motors, just as President Kennedy's man in the Pentagon, Robert McNamara, rolled off the Ford assembly line.)

Limited-government types knew they were in trouble when the house skinflint of the Eisenhower administration, Secretary of the Treasury George M. Humphrey, burbled, "America lives on wheels, and we have to provide the highways to keep America living on wheels and keep the kind and form of life that we want."

The Interstates dramatically altered patterns of domestic commerce and residency. They forcibly displaced hundreds of thousands of persons. They uglified vast stretches of America. And hardly anyone in a position of power raised a peep. Scattered farmers, New Englanders, and poets tried to slow down the Interstatists, but they were crushed as thoroughly as a car windshield pulverizes a June bug.

The Interstate's bulldozers proved as unstoppable as Soviet tanks rolling into Hungary. Resistance was almost always futile. New York City builder Robert Moses—who, contrary to his surname, would have stolen the Promised Land by eminent domain to put up a skyscraper—blustered that "you have to hack your way with a meat axe" through neighborhoods when their residents won't just roll over and play dead.

And hack the highwaymen did. By the late 1960s, Interstate construction was displacing 57,000 people per year; 87 percent of the buildings demolished were residences. In one 20-year stretch, 100,000 California houses were destroyed.

The razing of urban neighborhoods drove some of the dispossessed to militancy. In Washington, D.C., anti-expressway activists banded together as "Niggers Incorporated" to demand "No more white highways through black bedrooms." Alas, the doughty members of Niggers Incorporated lacked engineering degrees, and the president of the American Association of State Highway Officials told a congressional committee that "to allow local people to have a greater voice in the highway location and design for which they are not trained would negate the experience of trained highway professionals."

Robert Moses, contrary to his surname, would have stolen the Promised Land by eminent domain to build a highway.

One 1964 U.S. Department of Commerce publication conceded: "People living in the right-of-way path of a planned highway have the problem of finding other places to live." But the volume assured Americans that "relocated" persons often moved to houses with higher real-estate values. And isn't that what it's all about? A house is a house: Seen one, seen 'em all. Heck, Dwight Eisenhower lived in plenty during his lifetime.

So shut up and move, demanded the architects of the hugest public works project in history to those protesters who stood on the quaint principle of private property rights. I mean, really: What kind of commie could possibly dissent from so grand an achievement as the Interstate Highway System?

—Bill Kauffman

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Beat the Press

The hand that rules the press...rules the country—Judge Learned Hand

Media Air Kisses for Jeffords

I don't like Senator Jim Jeffords. I admit my bias the way a Yankees fan admits his bias against the Red Sox, the way dog people admit their bias against cat people. I just wish venerable news outfits like "60 Minutes" could admit theirs.

A case in point was the recent "60 Minutes" profile of Senator Jeffords following the release of his new book *I'm a Sausage-Spined Backstabber.* Oops sorry, that's what the title should be. The book is actually called *My Declaration of Independence.*

James Jeffords, longtime Republican senator from Vermont, ran for re-election in 2000. He won as a Republican in a national election which left the Senate with a one-seat GOP majority. Jeffords' version of the story is that his "conscience" forced him to leave the party—handing control of the Senate to the Democrats and giving a huge wedgie to President Bush—because the GOP had become too conservative.

Jeffords cited abortion, the environment, affirmative action, and other run-of-the-mill bugaboos. But Jeffords knew the party's positions on these issues—and comfortably voted his own way—for years, and never threatened to leave. He certainly knew where George Bush stood on these issues during the campaign. The one issue Jeffords singled out for particular emphasis was education spending under Bush's first budget. Jeffords felt it was not enough, despite the fact that the education bill was shaping up to be the most expensive one in at least three generations.

An alternate version of events, discussed openly in Washington, is that Jeffords bolted because a) he was afraid that 98-year-old Senator Strom Thurmond was about to die, throwing the GOP, and Jeffords specifically, into minority status, leaving him with no power; and b) his precious Northeast Dairy Compact, a byzantine bit of milk socialism cherished by dairy farmers in Vermont and reviled by economists, consumers, and more efficient dairy farmers, was on the verge of getting axed. Pundits from George Stephanopoulos to Norman Ornstein all but declared Jeffords had no choice but to leave the party if he lost his milk subsidies.

Back to "60 Minutes." The December 16 broadcast could have been produced by Jeffords' publicist. I checked the credits to make sure it wasn't. It had the feel of one of those post-WWII interviews with De Gaulle or Churchill where journalists ask the statesman, while he perambulates in his garden, how he copes with his legacy of victory and virtue.

"I knew if I didn't do what I had to do I would forever feel responsible," said Jeffords. "If I didn't exercise that power, it would be my responsibility and on my conscience, knowing what I could have done." I swear I heard a brass band playing the theme song to *Patton* in the background at that point. Not once were the words "dairy" or "Thurmond" uttered.

Usually, in these sorts of profiles—especially those about conservatives—you get an opposing view: "Critics, however, report that Trent Lott has a 13-year-old Laotian boy handcuffed to a pipe in his basement." In the Jeffords piece, the only "contrary" view came from Senator Chuck Grassley. Yes, he is a Republican, but the Senate is a club that frowns on saying nasty things about other members, and, more importantly, Grassley is Jeffords' best friend in the Senate. When asked if Jeffords stabbed him in the back, Grassley responded, "No, not at all. He didn't stab anybody in the back, because you don't stab people in the back when you do things out of conviction." He then blamed himself for Jeffords' departure.

Now, it's awfully nice of Grassley, who wept openly when Jeffords betrayed him, to take the bullet for his buddy. But, surely "60 Minutes" could have tracked down somebody who didn't see Jeffords as Sir Thomas More? My Rolodex is brimming with such people.

But Jeffords has become an icon among the media precisely because he fulfills their incessant insistence that the GOP is too conservative. Few are interested in the actual facts of why Jeffords left. Since December alone there have been hundreds of stories about Jeffords, yet according to a cursory Nexis search only about a dozen make any mention at all of the Dairy Compact. Instead, he is touted as a Churchillian figure. "I salute you!" declared Larry King.

Meanwhile, Jeffords is having an awful time in the Senate. Republicans despise him for his treachery and Democrats ignore him. His milk subsidies are again threatened by opposition from Republicans and Democrats alike, and he's run out of parties he can defect to. According to the *New Republic,* Jeffords recently admitted at a meeting of Democratic congressmen that he was "the most depressed I have felt." Perhaps his conscience is bothering him? —Jonah Goldberg

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Now Playing

©Columbia Pictures

Watching Americans On the Battlefield

Rival warlords presiding over outbursts of feudal violence. Destitute civilians struggling to build a meager life in the midst of a war zone. United States Special Forces watching over the mess like a nervous cook eyeing a pot that's about to boil over.

Sound familiar? It's not present-day Afghanistan but Somalia circa 1993, as chronicled in *Black Hawk Down*, a nonfiction book by Mark Bowden that has been adapted into a scorching new film. A testament to military bravery but hardly a rah-rah celebration of violence, a piercing consideration of U.S. foreign policy but not an anti-American rant, *Black Hawk Down* takes an unflinching look at modern warfare at a time when it makes headlines every day.

In 1993, Bill Clinton sent U.S. Special Forces to Somalia as part of a United Nations humanitarian mission to aid civilians ravaged by that country's civil war. After one of the ruthless local warlords—Mohammed Farrah Aidid—was charged with the murder of 24 U.N. peacekeepers, a team of elite American soldiers staged an operation to pluck two of Aidid's top men out of the battle-torn city of Mogadishu. The mission was a disaster. Two Black Hawk helicopters were shot down and U.S. soldiers were trapped for 18 hours in Mogadishu's hellish streets. When all was said and done, 18 Americans (and hundreds of Somalis) had lost their lives.

Black Hawk Down is unrelenting in its focus. We're immediately immersed in the community of Rangers and Delta Force soldiers who have been sent to Somalia with no clear mission (in one scene, the restrictions placed on them by their political superiors prevent them from firing on militiamen who kill civilians and steal supplies during a food drop). When the troops are finally called to action, we go right into Mogadishu with them and rarely leave their side. As the operation disintegrates and the soldiers are scattered—hiding from armed mobs of militiamen like rats in the city's crumbling buildings—their desperation becomes palpable. *Black Hawk Down* has such a claustrophobic, realistic atmosphere that the grimy dust of Mogadishu's streets seems to blow down the theater aisles.

There's gruesome violence here—I can't remember a war film that depicts the trauma caused by a single bullet more clearly—but director Ridley Scott has matured beyond the thrilling, queasy spectacle of *Gladiator* and the gore of *Hannibal*. If most combat movies play like a grown-up version of cops and robbers, Scott gives the gunplay here tragic weight; during one sequence, he silences the soundtrack each time a soldier is hit, highlighting the physical impact with an aural punch. His eye for detail also is sobering: At one point his camera pans across the litter left behind in an armored vehicle after combat—mainly piles of spent bullets and bits of torn flesh.

The difference between this war-is-hell message and that of most Hollywood pacifist tracts is that *Black Hawk Down* has an overriding respect for the U.S. soldiers on the screen. These aren't naive, bloodthirsty fools but brave patriots caught in a geopolitical quagmire that's beyond their immediate control. "Once that first bullet goes past your head, politics and all that shit goes right out the window," one soldier says to another early on.

That's the approach the movie takes as well, preferring instead to focus on the individual acts of bravery that prevented the death toll from rising above 18. Josh Hartnett—a riveting presence now that he's been given something less fluffy than *Pearl Harbor* to work with—plays the idealistic young Ranger Matt Eversmann, whose gift of command blossoms under gunfire. Tom Sizemore is scarily dedicated as Ranger Danny McKnight, a relentless machine who drags the wounded out of Mogadishu and instinctively turns around to rescue more. "Leave no man behind," is the movie's brash tag line, and these men practice what they preach.

The soldierly commitment we witness helps explain some of the successes American forces are now experiencing in Afghanistan. It seems obvious that the difference between our failure in Somalia in 1993 and our progress against Osama bin Laden today lies not in anything our soldiers did differently, but rather in the quality of the leaders above them who set the ground rules under which our fighting men were allowed to engage the enemy.

Black Hawk Down doesn't chronicle an American victory. But it's a searing salute to the spirit of the best Americans.

—Josh Larsen

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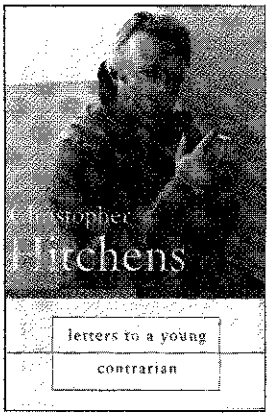
BookTalk

AGREEING TO DISAGREE

By John McWhorter

Letters to a Young Contrarian
By Christopher Hitchens
Basic Books, 226 pages, $22



The title of this book refers to Rainer Maria Rilke's *Letters to a Young Poet.* But there are two problems with Christopher Hitchens' attempt to parse "contrarian" as if it were a career choice.

For one thing, *many* writers consider themselves "contrarians." For instance, lots of regulars on the *Wall Street Journal*'s editorial page recall earlier Leftist allegiances. Likewise, Leftist editorialists sometimes "put themselves on the line" by, say, noting a good point or two about school vouchers. Lusty agreement with orthodoxy rarely motivates a person to broadcast his or her opinions. Some make their mark this way, but just as many burn to show the world how to split the difference between opposing camps, or how to blaze a fresh path, even if they mostly lean to one side of the political spectrum or the other.

The other problem concerns the wisdom of fashioning oneself deliberately as a "contrarian" in the literal sense. As Hitchens observes, certain people are innately indisposed to accept orthodoxies. But they do not disagree with all comers just for the sport of it: They sense an alternate truth. Certainly Hitchens himself always has. He repeatedly asserts in this book that we must judge a man not on what he thinks but on *how* he thinks.

As such, *Letters to a Young Contrarian* is less a guide to being professionally testy than a goad to intelligent engagement with the issues of the day. Writing to an imaginary acolyte, Hitchens girds him against the usual objections to opinions that stray beyond conventional boilerplate. Given my own experiences taking on the black Left, I particularly valued his presentation of a 1908 treatise by one F. M. Cornford which beautifully demolishes the eternal charge that dissenting views automatically "abet the other side." Hitchens is especially keen in his insistence that dispute is a sign of life, that the universal agreement so many wish for would be evidence of mental debility and ideological tyranny.

Hitchens gets nervier in places. He cherishes imperfect private behavior by famous thinkers, taking Dr. Martin Luther King as an example: "I like the fact that he had feet of clay and a digestive tract and reproductive organs: All human achievement must also be accomplished by mammals." Hitchens is not being merely libertine—he observes that flawed champions "strongly suggest that anyone could do what the heroes have done."

He devotes generous space to his withering condemnation of religious conviction. Eschewing the hedgings and parentheses in which many tuck their religious criticisms, Hitchens flatly denies that "some turgid and contradictory and sometimes evil and mad texts, obviously written by fairly unexceptional humans, are in fact the word of god."

One of Hitchens's choicest battles is in defense of strong opinions. "The Gray uniforms at Gettysburg might not have been deployed, or not have been defeated, if it were not for fanatics and absolutists like John Brown, who regarded compromise as disgrace." Ideological extremes can embody truth, Hitchens argues, and he warns against overvaluing consensus.

But even this open-minded author sometimes lapses into caricature and calumny. At one point he tosses off that "I have never found myself in the same *galére* as an outright fascist, and I have never found, even when making common cause with neo-conservatives, that I'm in the same camp as Henry Kissinger." Kissinger is Hitchens's current *bête noire*, but what basis is there for this flippant dismissal of a man whose ideology, strictly speaking, embodied just the sort of unsentimental sturdiness that Hitchens elevates as the mark of a serious thinker? It will not do for Hitchens to take as a given that the "contrarian" will despise certain figures just because he does.

Throughout this book, Hitchens regales us with his own wide reading, from popular works like *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* to more academic works by Miloscz, Kundera, Bonhoeffer, and others.

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Despite addressing the question directly in one of his "letters," he resists being too specific in recommending readings. This is a shame. Today's American youth are not suckled on the print-focused culture of the young Hitchens's mid-twentieth-century England. The Internet rules, and the dilution of our university curricula denies most students exposure to the works that Hitchens takes as fundamental. More than in the old days, the aspiring public intellectual must be self-taught. In this volume directed explicitly to the young, more specific literary mentoring would have been useful.

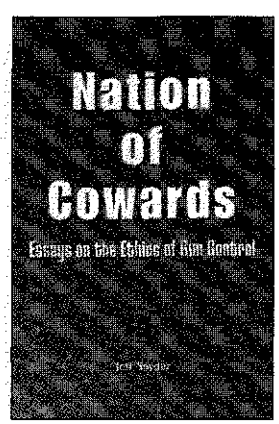
Amidst his endless reserve of flinty wisdom and acrid humor, Hitchens has in the end given us a kind of *My Dinner With Christopher*. Hitchens is less unique in being a self-described contrarian than he supposes. But he is a fiercely articulate one, who will stand the test of time better than most of his comrades.

John McWhorter is a professor of linguistics at the University of California, Berkeley, and author of the new book The Power of Babel: A Natural History of Language.

THE MORALITY BEHIND THE SECOND AMENDMENT

By Robert J. Cottrol

Nation of Cowards: Essays on the Ethics of Gun Control
By Jeff Snyder
Accurate Press, 174 pages, $24.95



Jeff Snyder's *Nation of Cowards* is a compilation of his essays on gun control published during the 1990s. That decade was one of both great hope and profound disappointment for proponents of the private right to keep and bear arms.

The hope came in the form of unexpected support from scholars in law, history, and the social sciences. Increasingly, research confirmed what had long been conventional wisdom among gun owners: The Second Amendment was indeed meant to protect the right of individuals to possess arms, and the possession of arms by the law-abiding public serves to deter criminal violence.

The disappointment was a public and media atmosphere that often made these new research insights politically irrelevant. During the '90s gun controllers gained traction unseen since the passage of national gun control legislation in 1968. Always a favorite of the national press, the gun control movement was greatly aided by the presidency of William Jefferson Clinton. The Clinton administration pushed the Brady Bill and assault-weapons legislation through Congress, often steamrolling reluctant rural Democrats in the process. The Clinton administration clamored for further restrictions on firearms ownership, and conducted an open ideological war with the National Rifle Association, thus insuring that the gun issue would remain at center stage in national politics. Snyder wrote his essays in this charged environment.

A columnist for *American Handgunner*, Snyder makes his arguments from first principles. His signature essay, "A Nation of Cowards," first published in *The Public Interest* in 1993, sets the stage. The gun debate is one about the morality of self-defense. For Snyder self-defense is not only a right; it is a moral imperative. An unwillingness to defend oneself is not only cowardice, but supremely immoral, an unwillingness to defend God's greatest gift—life itself.

Snyder questions what had been the unchallenged pieties of the gun control movement. The movement wasn't simply about the control of weapons; it was an effort to truncate the right of self-defense, it agitated for a culture of nonresistance as a survival strategy tactically and morally superior to preparing and acting to defend oneself. Snyder is at his best in head on taking on this philosophical claim and pointing out its flaws.

Snyder's other essays continue the battle. Some challenge the myth that the assault weapons ban had crime-fighting utility. Others dispute the morality of restrictive firearms licensing, and the legitimacy of the long-term judicial nullification of the Second Amendment, among other topics. This volume contains an especially valuable essay on "Guns and Feminism" showing the stark inconsistency between the quite proper concern of feminists with preventing rape and the prevailing unwillingness of the feminist movement to seriously consider armed self defense as one way of achieving that objective.

The essay "The Unbearable Lightness of Rights" is equally interesting. In it, Snyder argues that depending on government institutions to enforce the Second Amendment, or any other fundamental right, ultimately gives the state power to define the very measures that are designed to check its potential excesses. His solution? The rights found in the Bill of Rights, including the Second Amendment, must be defended by a vigorous, alert citizenry, actively willing to use the power of the jury to nullify oppressive laws.

Snyder has little patience for the kind of utilitarian arguments that usually accompany discussions of firearms policy, or other areas where the right of the individual is balanced against the needs or perceived needs of the larger society. Empirical battles rage in the gun arena. Public health researcher Arthur Kellerman claims that guns are 43 times more likely to kill members of a gun owning household than intruders. On the other side, sociologist Gary Kleck finds that ordinary citizens use guns in self-defense more than a million times a year. Economist John Lott's research indicates that liberalized laws

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permitting citizens with clean records to carry concealed handguns are responsible for significant decreases in street crime.

For Snyder, these debates are beside the point. He rejects the idea that any practical balancing of interests can settle the gun control battle. The issues are the rights of self-defense and moral choice by individuals, and today's or tomorrow's dispatches from the university computer lab do not change those basic arguments.

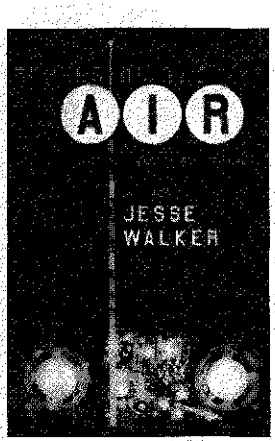
This absolutism is both the book's greatest weakness and its greatest strength. The essays offer a fundamental defense of Second Amendment principles that few policy makers or members of the public, even sympathetic ones, are likely to latch onto. Yet by taking a clear, uncompromising stand, Snyder makes the moral case for self defense, for resistance over passivity, and ultimately for courage over cowardice.

Robert Cottrol is Harold Paul Green Research Professor at George Washington University.

A LITTLE REBELLION HERE AND THERE

By Wirkman Virkkala

Rebels on the Air: An Alternative History of Radio in America
By Jesse Walker
New York University Press,
326 pages, $24.95



Though amateurs invented broadcast radio, the amateur spirit did not long prevail. Professionalism took over. As Jesse Walker, an associate editor of *Reason* magazine, relates in *Rebels on the Air*, it was government that quickly squelched the diversity and experimentalism early radio promised.

With the Radio Act of 1912, the American government in effect nationalized the electromagnetic spectrum, divvying out user privileges by licensing. What the government was trying to do was rein in the "hams." For a while, it seemed that every other clever lad was making his own crystal set, receiving and sending messages over the ether. These hams had begun experimenting with broadcasting (rather than mere point-to-point communication) a few years before the 1912 Act.

As businesses entered the broadcast game, they turned to hams for expertise. During World War I, the military realized, likewise, that the hams provided the best source of radio communications skills. But the Commerce Department's efforts to solve the problem of radio interference precipitated a larger crisis that Congress tried to fix with the Radio Act of 1927, which created the forerunner of today's Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The bill was not without dissenters. One senator charged it was "fair to only one institution…the monopoly that will be created under it."

These words were prophetic, if overstated. Radio became, primarily, the domain of business. Competition persisted, but the early promise of a voluntary order—the hidden history that Walker uncovers in his fascinating second chapter—vanished in the advance of Progressive-era regulated capitalism.

Still, the innovative spirit did not die outright: Mainstream radio helped reinvent American life, and innovators outside the main current have surfaced now and again to stir the airwaves. It is on these "rebels" that Walker focuses. For example:

Lewis Hill, conscientious objector, dissatisfied radio broadcaster, creator of Berkeley, California's infamous KPFA. In 1946, "no station like KPFA existed anywhere else in America. Over the next decades, its commentators would range from Trotskyists to Georgists to Caspar Weinberger; its music would range from opera to jazz to John Cage."

In 1968, in Seattle, Washington, Lorenzo Milam turned a donut shop into a radio station where "a single day's lineup might include both a special report from the front lines of the civil rights struggle and a 15-minute program produced by the White Citizens' Council."

Also in Texas, much more recently, Joe Ptak and Jeffrey "Zeal" Stefanoff ran a little radio station—Kind Radio—out of a garage. One a registered Democrat, the other a registered Republican, they had a loyal following in their town of San Marcos.

Businesses discourage the FCC from licensing low-power niche stations like these, and the government did shut Kind down. As a result, most radio is relatively uniform and boring.

Walker concedes that "today's radio marketplace is open enough that the stations that survive in it are meeting somebody's needs." He has no wish to drive off the air "those two oxymorons, 'classic rock' and 'young country,' " or even " 'easy listening,' 'adult contemporary,' and the unlistenable concoction called 'smooth jazz.' " After all, diversity and freedom demand tolerance. But, he asks, why not open up radio beyond these still rather constricted genres?

"A freer media landscape is possible," Walker writes, "one that would allow us greater freedom to choose, to create, and to escape."

Wirkman Virkkala is a writer living in the Pacific Northwest.

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Edited by Martin Morse Wooster

the Digest

Summaries of important new research from the nation's universities, think tanks, and investigative publications

POLITICS

Improving The WTO

Claude E. Barfield, *Free Trade, Sovereignty, Democracy: The Future of the World Trade Organization.* AEI Press, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

Since its creation in 1995, the World Trade Organization (WTO) has been very controversial. American Enterprise Institute scholar Claude Barfield offers several reforms the WTO can implement to become a less controversial and more productive force for advancing free trade.

Become less secretive. Nearly all of the WTO's proceedings are behind closed doors, leading to charges that the organization has things to hide. Advocates of secrecy contend that it's necessary to prevent governments from grandstanding or using the media to block international trade negotiations. But Barfield finds these fears unfounded. While proprietary corporate data introduced during WTO deliberations should remain confidential, all briefs introduced by governments should be available on the Internet as soon as they're presented by a WTO member state.

Keep nonprofits out. Some major nonprofits (chiefly environmental organizations) are clamoring to join the WTO with the same voting privileges as member states. They cite as precedent that some of the United Nations' affiliate agencies allow nonprofits as full members. But these international organizations do not have any power to make decisions that are binding on nations and corporations. Given that the WTO does have such power, it's important that government representatives who are accountable to voters make the decisions. Voters have no say in the decisions of Greenpeace or the Gates Foundation, so why should these entities have votes on the WTO?

Alter punishments. A WTO member can flout a WTO ruling, but must pay the price in increased tariffs. For example, when the WTO ruled that the European Union (EU) was unfairly blocking Latin American banana imports, the EU continued its policy, and the WTO allowed the U.S. to increase its tariffs by $200 million to compensate for lost sales by U.S. companies with Latin American plantations. Such a punishment only increases trade barriers and makes matters worse. Far better, Barfield believes, for the offending nation to either pay a fine or reduce other tariffs.

Get Congress involved. One great danger the WTO poses is that it may go beyond its original mandate to encourage free trade to become something more like a trans-national government. There are signs the WTO may be opening the door to future rulings based not solely on trade issues, but on environmental, human rights, and other political issues.

Given the expansion of WTO authority, Barfield suggests that "Congress would be well advised to continue its caution and vigilance." He suggests a bipartisan commission spend several years studying how WTO decisions affect American laws. Congress might also establish a permanent joint committee charged with overseeing how decisions by the WTO and other international agencies affect U.S. domestic laws and regulations.

Third World: Pay Your Bills!

William Easterly, "Debt Relief," in *Foreign Policy* (November/December 2001), 1779 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

Many liberal activists want international lending agencies to allow Third World countries to repudiate some or all of their debts. But World Bank economist William Easterly contends that most of the arguments for debt relief lack a factual basis. Among them:

Third World debts are illegitimate. Advocates of debt relief contend that more responsible Third World leaders shouldn't be held responsible for their predecessors' fiscal gluttony. For example, they contend that Uganda's current president, Yoweri Museveni, shouldn't be held liable for Ugandan debts accumulated during the genocidal rule of Idi Amin. Under Museveni's watch, however, Uganda has squandered billions intervening in the ongoing Congolese civil war. Retroactively cancelling debts would only encourage more profligate government.

Debt increases Third World poverty. But most of the Third World countries in financial trouble got that way because their governments wasted vast sums on dubious enterprises. Kenya racked up debts to build a lavish international airport near the home of long-time president Daniel arap Moi. Ivory Coast built two new capitals while its residents starved. Would these countries suddenly become prudent if their debt burdens eased?

Debt relief increases money spent on

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health and education. Most of the debt-ridden countries do not know how their budgets are spent. One International Monetary Fund/World Bank study found that only two of 25 indebted Third World countries knew how government money was spent. Another World Bank study of Uganda found that only 13 percent of that nation's education budget was actually spent on schools.

Debt relief would help Third World countries only if lenders required troubled countries to adopt balanced budgets, free trade, and privatization: proven measures for ensuring economic growth. "The challenge for civil society, the World Bank, the IMF, and other agencies," Easterly writes, "is to ensure that debt forgiveness really does lead to government reforms that enhance the prospects of poor countries."

ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

Time To Limit Antitrust?

David S. Evans, "Clinton's Brave New Business World," in *Regulation* (Fall 2001), Cato Institute, 1000 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001

The Justice Department is approaching a settlement with Microsoft to curb the software giant's anti-competitive practices. But David Evans, a vice president of National Economic Research Associates, argues that the Microsoft case was a misguided effort to eliminate "aggressive business practices" that did not harm consumers or reduce competition.

Before Bill Clinton took office, the Justice Department and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) launched antitrust lawsuits when they had evidence that companies were colluding to reduce competition. The Clinton administration, by contrast, challenged corporations to show that they weren't restricting rivals. Moreover, its suits were launched without clear evidence that consumers were suffering because of corporate behavior. A major antitrust case against Intel, for example, ended after the FTC's expert witness admitted there was no evidence that Intel's sharing technical information with its customers about new products harmed consumers.

The courts trimmed the Clinton FTC's aggressive antitrust policies. In a 1999 decision, the Supreme Court declared that the Commission had to provide evidence that consumers were hurt by the California Dental Association's policy of restricting member advertising. It then sent the case to a lower court, which ruled against the FTC. A district court judge dismissed another FTC lawsuit against American Airlines, stating that government antitrust lawyers were engaging in "a semantic sleight of hand" to avoid producing evidence that the airline had hurt consumers.

Evans suggests government antitrust actions should be limited to cases involving blatant anti-competitive policies such as price fixing. In areas where the state has no evidence that a corporate policy has "significant net effects on prices, output, innovation, or consumer welfare," then government ought to leave business alone.

Small Business Burdened

Mark Crain and Thomas Hopkins, *Impact of Regulatory Costs on Small Firms.* U.S. Small Business Administration, 409 Third Street S.W., Washington, D.C. 20416

The burden of government regulations on business is heaviest of all, economists Mark Crain and Thomas Hopkins show, on smaller enterprises.

In 2000, they calculate, it cost U.S. businesses $843 billion to comply with government regulations. They divided these regulations into four types: environmental, economic (i.e., restrictions on what businesses can sell and buy), workplace, and tax regulations.

Overall, Crain and Hopkins estimate, businesses in 2000 paid an average of $4,722 per employee to comply with federal regulations. Small manufacturers, however, pay a particularly heavy bill for Washington's commands: $16,920 per employee, compared to $7,059 per employee among large manufacturers.

Environmental regulations particularly hurt entrepreneurs. A typical small manufacturer paid $11,671 per employee to comply with federal environmental mandates, while larger firms paid $2,515 per employee. This environmental burden has doubled in the past decade; an earlier study by Hopkins calculated that in 1992 small manufacturers paid $5,015 per employee (in inflation-adjusted 2000 dollars).

SOCIETY

End The Teacher School Racket

Frederick M. Hess, *Tear Down This Wall: The Case for a Radical Overhaul of Teacher Certification.* Progressive Policy Institute, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue S.E. #400, Washington, D.C. 20003

American public schools are going to need several hundred thousand new teachers in the next decade. But today's counterproductive teacher certification requirements ensure that few of our best and brightest will go into teaching. Frederick Hess, a professor of education and government at the University of Virginia, argues that most of the requirements public school teachers now have to meet should simply be eliminated.

Existing teacher certification requirements mandate that aspiring teachers attend a graduate school of education for one or two years. But most of these schools are third-rate institutions that routinely certify 95 percent of those admitted. There is no consensus on what students need to learn in education schools (one pro-certification study called on education majors to learn "valuing in decision-making"). And most education schools are dominated by hard-left dogmatists. The "received

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wisdom in teacher education," according to Hess, is that "aggressive multiculturalism is a good thing" and that "aspiring white teachers ought to confront society's ingrained racism."

Teacher certification requirements block many qualified individuals from teaching. Because relatively few students are willing to endure mind-numbing teacher-school curricula, many school districts must fall back on "emergency" or "provisional" certification to get warm bodies at all. Nationally, 12 percent of all public school teachers are "provisionally" certified, most in inner-city school systems.

Hess thinks public schools ought to mandate three requirements for new teachers: that they have a B.A. or B.S., that they pass a tough test to prove they know the subject they're teaching, and that they pass a thorough criminal background check. Districts would be free to add any additional requirements if they wanted, but the above would open up a vastly broader and more talented pool for schools to hire from. Hess also calls on schools to set up programs wherein a new teacher would be provisionally hired and carefully supervised until he had demonstrated his competence.

Freed from certification duties, Hess believes that education schools would evolve to become something like journalism schools, which some students would attend to add value to their resumes. It is time, he concludes, to "move beyond a system that trains and licenses teachers in the same manner as dog groomers."

Toughen Divorce, Not Child Support

Bryce Christensen, "The Strange Politics of Child Support," in *Society* (November/December 2001), Rutgers University, 35 Berrue Circle, Piscataway, New Jersey 08854

There's a consensus these days that one of the best ways to strengthen America's families is to tighten child support laws. *Time*, for example, reports that "the deadbeat dad" is a "selfish figure condemned by liberals and conservatives alike."

Bryce Christensen, a scholar at the Howard Center, disagrees. The best way to preserve marriage and the family, he argues, is to make child support less draconian—but make it harder to divorce. Advocates of more aggressive child support, he contends, "have moved us a dangerous step closer to a police state."

Wives initiate two-thirds of all divorce cases in the U.S., and under "no-fault" divorce laws, neither partner has to give a reason for ending a marriage. Moreover, under a long-standing rule known as the "tender years doctrine," courts usually award custody of children to the parent who raises them as infants and toddlers—which, even now, is usually the mother. Thus, as West Virginia Supreme Court Justice Richard Neely observes, under current laws, "a blameless father often emerges from divorce courts with all the financial responsibility of marriage and none of its emotional or economic rewards."

"Draconian child-support collection," Christensen argues, makes matters worse. Courts determine child-support payments mechanically. As Urban Institute researcher Elaine Sorensen discovered, when a father's income declined by 15 percent or more, courts were only willing to reduce child support in 4 percent of the cases. This makes mandated child support particularly difficult for low-income fathers.

Moreover, child-support enforcers often make mistakes. A 1998 collection effort in Virginia had a 6 percent error rate, resulting in 2,300 Virginians having to gather documents to prove their innocence in court. States which falsely accuse a father of not paying child support do not reimburse these men for their legal bills when courts find them innocent.

Rather than ever more stringent child-support policies, Christensen suggests efforts to ensure that divorces don't occurr in the first place. What's better for children, he asks: a two-parent family, or a single mother and a punitive child-support check?

Working Wives, Sick Families

Ross M. Stolzenberg, "It's About Time and Gender: Spousal Employment and Health," in *American Journal of Sociology* (July 2001), University of Chicago Press, P.O. Box 37005, Chicago, Illinois 60637

The increasing participation of women in the workforce has had many consequences. One of them, according to University of Chicago sociologist Ross Stolzenberg, is that when wives work full-time, husbands are more likely to get ill. A wife's decision to work more than 40 hours a week, he argues, has "substantial, statistically significant, negative effects on changes in her husband's health over that time span."

Stolzenberg looked at data from 1986 and 1989 from the Americans' Changing Lives (ACL) survey, a long-running study by the University of Michigan about how Americans live and work. He found that when wives work over 40 hours a week, husbands were 14 percent more likely to be in ill health than when their wives worked part-time or were at home. By contrast, a husband who worked long hours had no affect on his wife's health.

What accounts for this difference? Stolzenberg found one clue in another ACL question that asked husbands and wives if they regularly gave their spouse "health reminders" (such as getting enough sleep, exercising, and taking medication). The study found that husbands and wives usually were each other's primary source of health reminders, and working wives were less likely to provide health information to their husbands than more traditional wives. When women abandon their traditional supportive role in a family to enter the labor force full time, the evidence says, family members pay a price.

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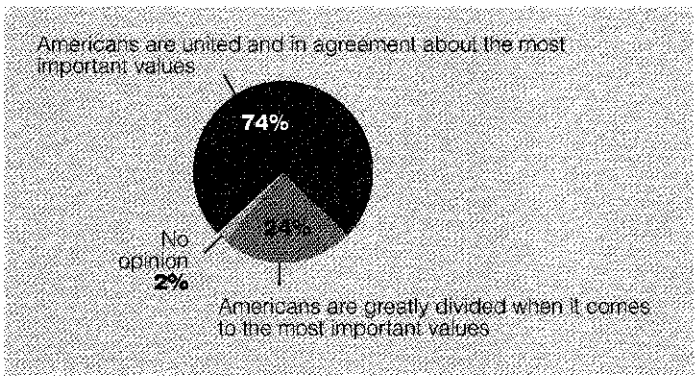
Opinion Pulse

Edited by Karlyn Bowman

Great Debates

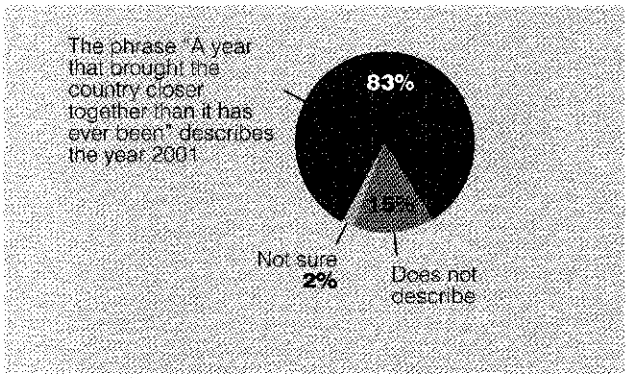
Three quarters of all Americans see the country as united and in agreement about the most important values, and large numbers believe the events of September 11 brought the country closer together. In these pages, the editors look at Americans' views in a number of areas that continue to generate divisions and controversy.

Question: Which of the following statements comes closer to your view...?



Source: Gallup/CNN/*USA Today*, November-December 2001.

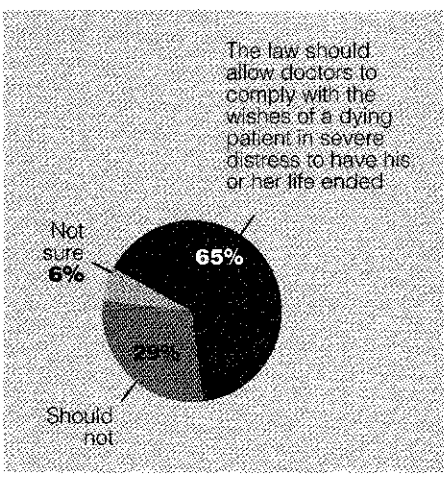
Question: Do you think...?



Source: Harris Interactive/*Time*/CNN, December 2001.

Most polls today show that Americans favor doctor-assisted suicide for people who are terminally ill.

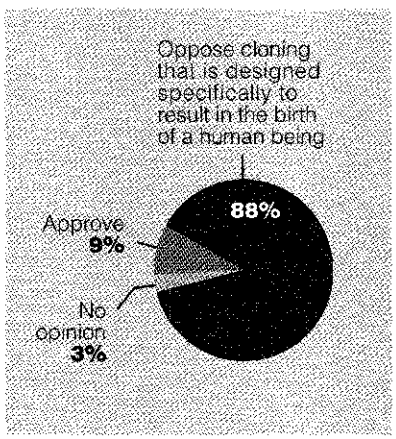
Question: Do you think...?



Source: Harris Interactive/*Time*/CNN, December 2001.

By huge margins, Americans oppose efforts to clone human beings. Opinion is less clear on using animals for therapeutic cloning purposes.

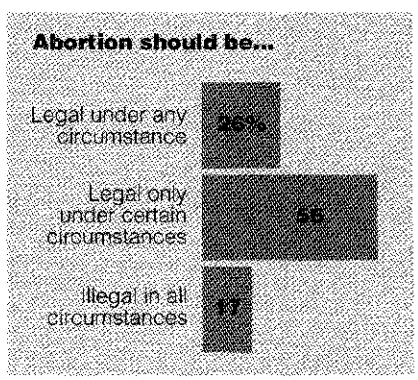
Question: Do you...?



Source: Gallup/CNN/*USA Today*, November, 2001.

Over the past 30 years, Americans have refused to put themselves in either the pro-choice or pro-life camps. Most people come down in the middle, supporting abortion in limited circumstances.

Question: Do you think...?



Source: Gallup/CNN/*USA Today*, August 2001.

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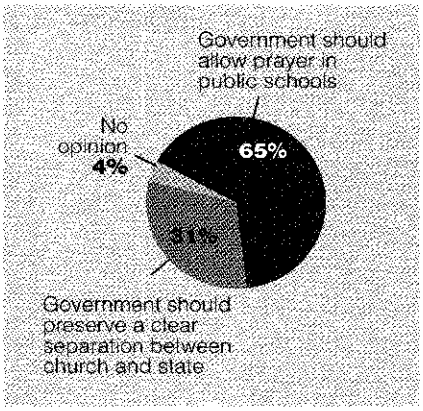
The debate over prayer in public schools in elite circles never involved many rank-and-file Americans, who favor it by solid margins.

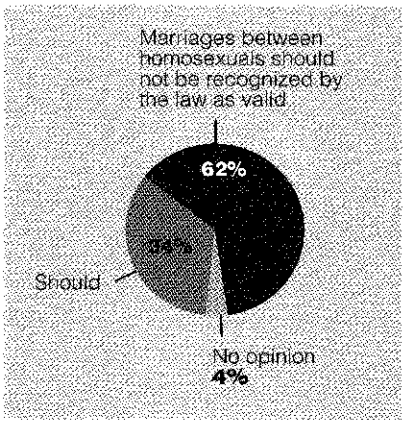
Question: Let me read you two positions on school prayer. Between these positions, which do you tend to side with more...?



Source: Hart-Teeter Research for NBC News/*Wall Street Journal*, June 1999.

Pollsters began to ask questions about homosexual marriage in the late 1980s. Most polls find the public opposed to the idea, although there is some support for job-related benefits.

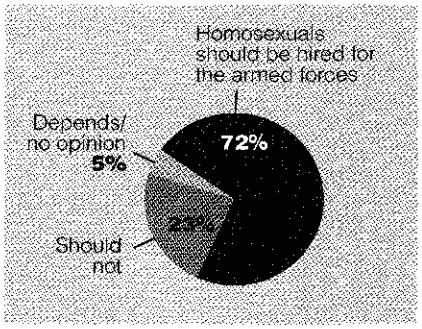
Question: Do you think...?



Source: Gallup/CNN/*USA Today*, January 2001.

Majorities say homosexuals should be hired for most occupations and should be able to serve in the military, a subject of considerable controversy in the early 1990s.

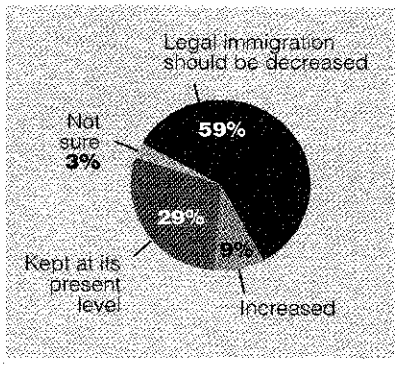
Question: Do you think...?



Source: Gallup/CNN/*USA Today*, May 2001.

Americans want to reduce immigration, but they also recognize the important contributions of immigrant groups.

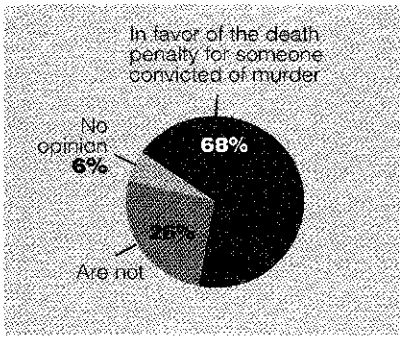
Question: Should...?



Source: CBS News/*New York Times*, December 2001.

Support for the death penalty for someone convicted of murder is still strong, although it is down from the mid-1990s, when 80 percent supported it.

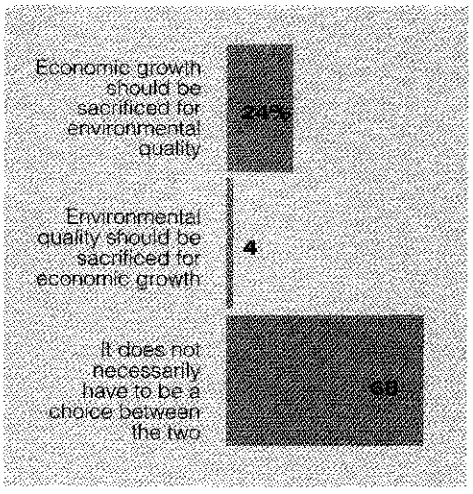
Question: Are you...?



Source: Gallup/CNN/*USA Today*, October 2001.

Over a quarter century ago, Americans decided that the country could have both economic growth and environmental quality. They continue to believe that the two go hand-in-hand.

Question: Do you believe...?



Source: Wirthlin Worldwide, October 1999.

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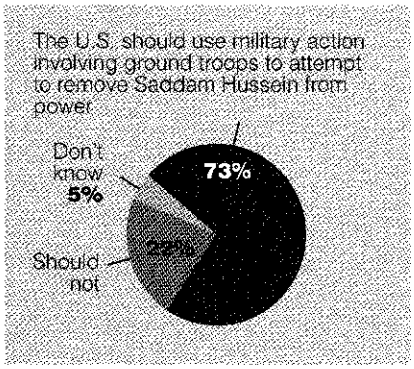
Great Debates (continued)

There is little public dissent about widening the current war to go after regimes that harbor terrorists. Americans support military action against Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

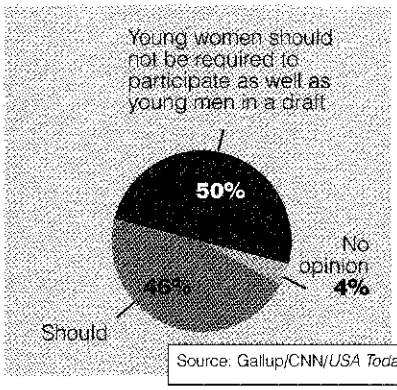
Question: Do you think...?



Source: Harris Interactive/CNN/*Time*, December 2001.

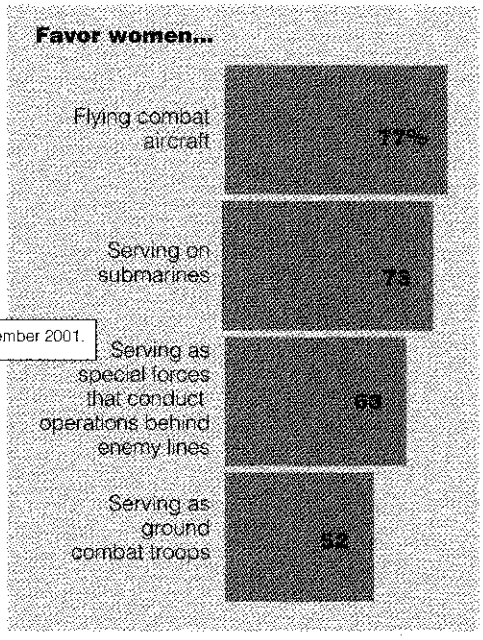
Americans are divided about drafting women but believe that women who decide to join the military should have equal opportunities with men in combat positions.

Question: If a draft were to become necessary...?



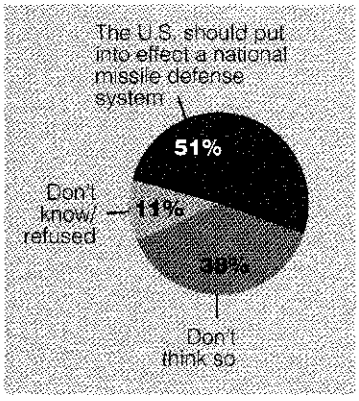
Source: Gallup/CNN/*USA Today*, December 2001.

Question: Next, I will read you a list of jobs in the military that are considered combat jobs. Do you...?



Americans favor construction of a missile defense system.

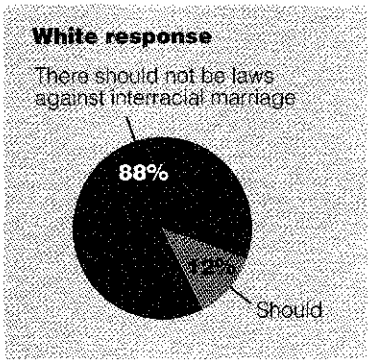
Question: Do you think...?



Source: Princeton Survey Research Associates for Pew Research Center, May 2001.

Overwhelming majorities of whites oppose laws against interracial marriage. Forty years ago, majorities favored them. Today, teens express few reservations about dating and marrying people of other races.

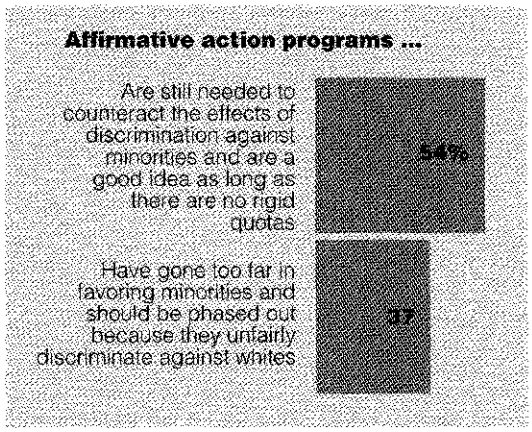
Question: Do you think...?



Source: National Opinion Research Center, 2000.

Americans believe affirmative action has been good for the country, but they are more divided about it now.

Question: Let me read you two brief statements about affirmative action and ask which one comes closer to your point of view...



Source: Hart-Teeter Research for NBC News/*Wall Street Journal*, March 2000.

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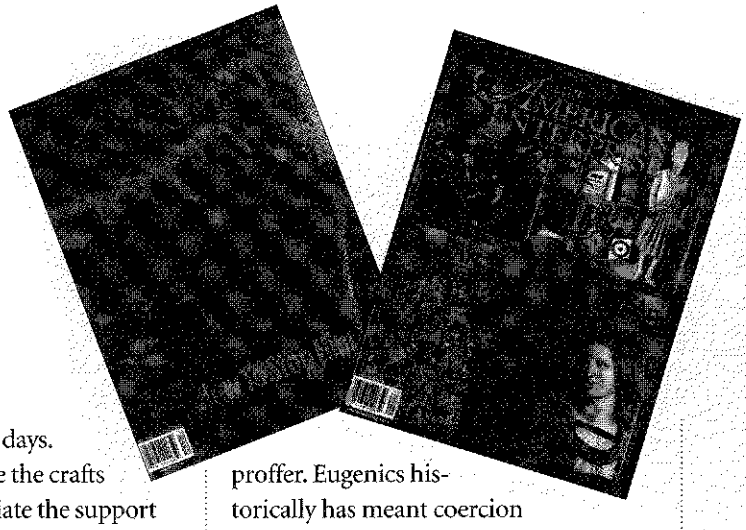

The root cause of the obscenity of today's so-called "art" is the fools who pay the ridiculous prices for works by such people as Andres Serrano (January/February 2002). If these aficionados refused to pay the prices asked for this art, there would be no Serranos.

Bill Kelly
Dundas, Minnesota

I believe one of the reasons that colleges, in particular, go for so much terrible art and architecture ("The Rise and Fall of Anti-Social Architecture," by Philip Langdon, January/February 2002) is that they have inordinate amounts of money to throw around. This avant garde architectural binge is a public display of that. Tuition is simply much too high.

James Kelly
Feasterville, Pennsylvania

Karl Zinsmeister's treatment of contemporary art ("BIRD'S EYE," January/February 2002) can only be considered a rant. Beauty is relative. And what exactly does he mean by "honest reality"? Artists are not con men and cannot convince others to accept their art. Mr. Zinsmeister should take a closer look at Modern and contemporary art.

Martin Kuchar
Toronto, Canada

Thank you very much for your coverage of the art world (January/February 2002). It's high time the truth was spoken about what passes for art these days. Those of us who practice the crafts of traditional art appreciate the support we get from magazines like yours.

Ralph Deuschle
President, Sonoran Arts League
Scottsdale, Arizona

Karl Zinsmeister (BIRD'S EYE, December 2001) did not go far enough in urging Israel to abandon its settlements, which provoke the Arab world, are illegal, and will inspire terrorists as long as they are in place. Abandoning the settlements does not mean sacrificing security. The Israeli Army can operate in the occupied territories as long as it wants. The U.S. did not settle in Germany, or Japan, or Afghanistan, but our military stayed as long as it needed to. We must stop indulging ethnic politics with respect to Israel.

Robert Browning
Arlington, Virginia

Adam Wolfson achieves an incredible mix of muddle-headed thinking and name calling in his screed against genetic engineering ("Does Genetic Engineering Endanger Human Freedom?" October/November 2001). Since it appears that most of his article consists of name-calling masquerading as argument, it is hard to know what to say in response.

Let me simply suggest that when the term eugenics is invoked in this kind of writing it had best be invoked with far more care than Mr. Wolfson sees fit to proffer. Eugenics historically has meant coercion and murder in the name of race improvement—not a public policy that I would favor. But, the term is also used to refer to efforts to improve individual health. The term might even be used to describe efforts to improve one's own abilities, or those of one's children. I would argue that it is at least possible to make a moral case for this form of "eugenics."

Everyday parents in America use genetic information to end pregnancies that will lead to dead, dying, or severely disabled infants. Many individuals would use genetics to avoid having a child with juvenile diabetes or cystic fibrosis or Canavan's disease if they could do so using gamete selection, gene therapy, or genetic testing.

The only argument Mr. Wolfson can muster concerning such behavior is that these are informed choices defended by liberals. This kind of cant has no place in the emerging discussion of how to apply genetic knowledge, or whether to set limits on what parents and doctors can or cannot do.

The core moral ground for applying genetic knowledge to human beings is that such application must either prevent terrible suffering and premature death or enhance the interests and well-being of individuals. Mr. Wolfson has failed utterly to show why genetic engineering cannot do both.

Arthur L. Caplan
Center for Bioethics
University of Pennsylvania

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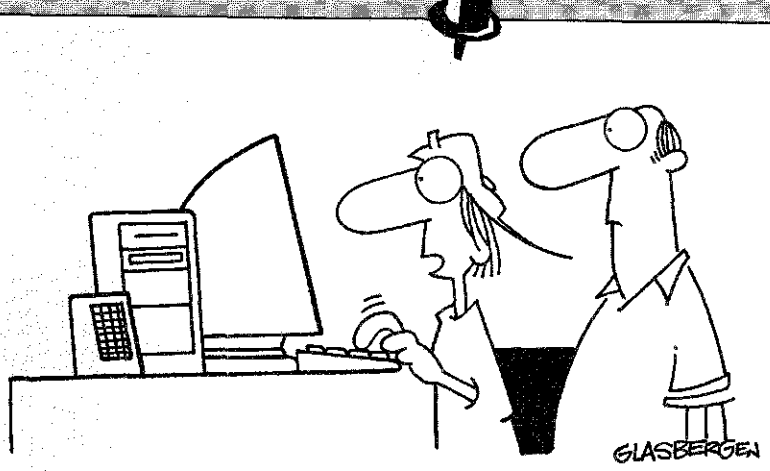

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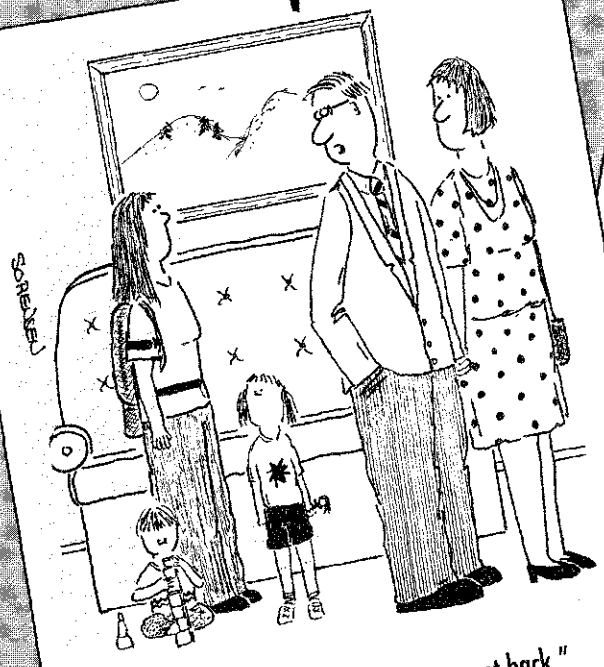
"Wait a minute—this can't be me. I'm a much younger woman."



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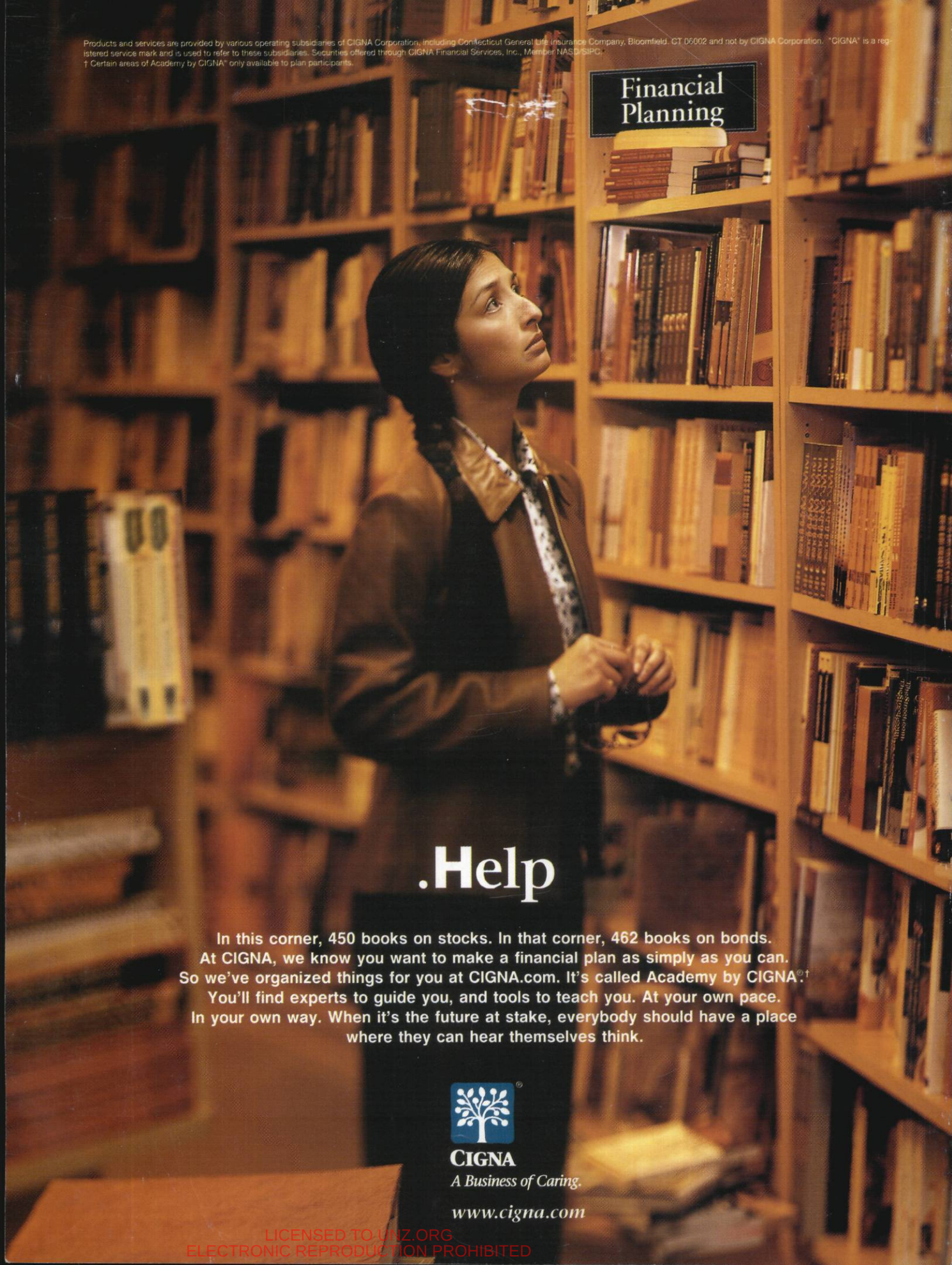

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